

Healthy Panthers

October

Happy October, Pinewood families! With October comes lots of fall treats and every kiddo's favorite day...Halloween! This month we are going to focus on dental health so that you and your child can enjoy some sweets worry-free.



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Protecting Dental Health

Why it Matters:

According to the CDC, about 20% of school-age children have an untreated cavity. Cavities can be painful and result in difficulty eating, playing and talking. Cavities can also lead to infections which can be extremely painful and more complex to treat.

What are Cavities?

All mouths contain bacteria living on and around the teeth. When your child consumes food and drink containing sugar, the bacteria produce plaque, the white film that coats teeth. This plaque causes decay of the tooth, known as a cavity.

Teeth-brushing Basics:

- Have your child brush at least twice a day (morning and night). If possible, encourage them to brush after meals or consuming sugary treats.
- Choose a toothbrush that fits easily in your child's mouth and can reach spaces between the teeth and the cheek.
- Choose a fluoridated toothpaste for your child (if over age 2). Watch your child to make sure that they spit it out when they are done.
- Teach your child to brush all the surfaces of each tooth using small circles. Don't forget to have them brush their tongue as well!
- Brush your teeth alongside your child. This models healthy behavior and allows them to get a sense of how long the process should take.

What You Can Do:

- If possible, take your child to the dentist every 6 months, as well as any time they complain of tooth pain.
- Dental care can be expensive. If you are concerned about this, check with your local dental schools to see if they are offering free clinics.
- Talk to your child's school nurse, medical provider, or dentist for assistance obtaining toothbrushes and toothpaste if needed.
- Have your child watch YouTube videos or read books teaching about dental health.

Don't forget about reporting your child's absence(s) via the Panther Tracks link below!



[Panther Tracks Absence Reporting](#)

