The following activities will help your students learn about the mouth and teeth, what they do for us, and how to take care of them.

Related KidsHealth Links

Articles for Kids:

Your Teeth
KidsHealth.org/kid/htbw/teeth.html

Taking Care of Your Teeth
KidsHealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/body/teeth_care.html

What’s a Cavity?
KidsHealth.org/kid/talk/qa/cavity.html

Your Tongue
KidsHealth.org/kid/htbw/tongue.html

Bad Breath
KidsHealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/body/bad_breath.html

Braces
KidsHealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/braces.html

The Reality of Retainers
KidsHealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/retainers.html

Articles for Teens:

Mouth and Teeth
TeensHealth.org/teen/your_body/body basics/mouth_teeth.html

Taking Care of Your Teeth
TeensHealth.org/teen/your_body/take_care/teeth.html

All About Orthodontia
TeensHealth.org/teen/your_body/medical care/braces.html

What Causes Bad Breath?
TeensHealth.org/teen/your_body/take care/halitosis.html

Discussion Questions

Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

1. While the teeth may be the most durable substance in the body, we still need to take care of them. Brushing your teeth is just one way to care for your teeth. Brainstorm a list of other ways to keep your pearly whites in working order. What happens to your teeth when you don’t take care of them properly?

2. When was the last time you visited the dentist? Describe your experience and how you felt during your appointment.
Activities for Students

Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

Dental Health Infographic

**Objectives:**
Students will:
- Learn about the prevalence of dental health problems and how to avoid them

**Materials:**
- Computer with Internet access, color printer
- Art supplies (colored pencils, markers, drawing paper, or art and graphing software)
- Plain, unlined paper

**Class Time:**
2 hours

**Activity:**
Do some research online using credible sources and find two or three interesting facts or statistics about dental health problems, such as plaque, tartar, cavities, gingivitis, periodontitis, etc. Then create an eye-catching infographic that illustrates your data. You can use a catchy heading and colorful graphs and images to convey your message. Print your infographic and hang it in a school hallway or in the cafeteria to help educate your classmates. Make sure your infographic includes a tip on how to avoid the problems cited.

**Extension:**
Create a superhero to protect your mouth and teeth from decay. How would this hero protect the teeth, and what would he or she need to do the job? What ability does he or she have that others don’t have that will enable him or her to fight tooth decay?
Talking Back

Objectives:
Students will:
• Identify problems that occur as a result of not taking care of the mouth and teeth
• Demonstrate how to properly care for the mouth and teeth

Materials:
• Computer with Internet access
• Pen or pencil
• Lined paper

Class Time:
30 minutes

Activity:
Imagine that you are a disgruntled mouth that has been mistreated for some time and write a letter imploring your body to take better care of you and your teeth. In your letter, describe what’s happened to you because of this negligence along with what your body can do to help you recover.

Extensions:
1. Write a song that emphasizes the importance of taking care of your teeth. Create a song title that will catch the listener’s attention.
2. Create a video for young children demonstrating how to effectively brush and floss.

Reproducible Materials
Quiz
KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/body/parts/teeth_quiz.pdf

Quiz: Answer Key
KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/body/parts/teeth_quiz_answers.pdf
Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question.

1. List the two main functions of the mouth and teeth.
   ___________________________________
   ___________________________________

2. Name the four types of teeth people have in their mouths.
   ___________________________________
   ___________________________________
   ___________________________________
   ___________________________________

3. Pick two types of teeth and describe what they do.
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

4. The outer layer of_________________________ protects the inside of the tooth.

5. Which part joins the tooth with the jawbone?
   a. pulp
   b. dentin
   c. crown
   d. cementum

6. The best way to prevent cavities is to get rid of ____________________________.

7. True or false: Eating sugary food with a meal is less harmful to your teeth than eating sugary food by itself. ________________

8. List three ways to prevent tooth decay and gum disease.
   ___________________________________
   ___________________________________
   ___________________________________

9. True or false: Gum disease only happens to people over 50. ________________

10. When gums bleed and are tender, puffy, or red, it’s called:
    a. periodontitis
    b. gingivitis
    c. gumalonia
Quiz Answer Key

1. List the two main functions of the mouth and teeth.
   - aid in digesting food
   - helping us speak

2. Name the four types of teeth people have in their mouths.
   - incisors
   - canines
   - premolars
   - molars

3. Pick two types of teeth and describe what they do.
   - incisors: cut and chop food
   - canines: tear food
   - premolars: crush and grind food
   - molars: grind food and help tongue swallow food

4. The outer layer of __________________________ protects the inside of the tooth.  
   - enamel

5. Which part joins the tooth with the jawbone?
   - a. pulp
   - b. dentin
   - c. crown
   - d. cementum

6. The best way to prevent cavities is to get rid of __________________________.  
   - plaque

7. True or false: Eating sugary food with a meal is less harmful to your teeth than eating sugary food by itself. ____________true

8. List three ways to prevent tooth decay and gum disease.
   - any three of the following: brush teeth at least twice per day,
   - use toothpaste with fluoride, floss once a day, visit a dentist
   - twice a year, eat a healthy diet, don’t smoke

9. True or false: Gum disease only happens to people over 50. ____________false: anyone can develop gum disease

10. When gums bleed and are tender, puffy, or red, it’s called:
    - a. periodontitis
    - b. gingivitis
    - c. gumalonia