

# Promoting Healthy Smiles in Grades K-5

Developing good dental care practices at a young age promotes healthy habits throughout life.

## IN NORTH DAKOTA



68% of 3rd Grade Students (2018)

70% of Kindergartners (2019)

**Had cavities (treated or untreated decay)**



23% of 3rd Grade Students (2018)

47% of Kindergartners (2019)

**Needed dental care (urgent or early treatment)**

## Things To Do

- ✓ Brush your teeth twice a day, two minutes each time.
- ✓ See a dentist for dental cleanings and exams every six months.
- ✓ Floss daily after brushing your teeth.
- ✓ Drink fluoridated water and use fluoride toothpaste to protect tooth health.
- ✓ Eat fruits, vegetables, and nuts to help maintain dental health.
- ✓ Ask your dentist about fluoride varnish and dental sealants to prevent decay.

## Things NOT to Do

- ✗ Regularly drink sugary drinks (such as apple juice, chocolate milk, sports drinks, or soda).
- ✗ Force baby teeth out. If teeth are difficult to wiggle, they are not ready to come out.
- ✗ Frequently eat chewy candies such as caramel or gummies. DO brush after eating these candies. They will rot tooth enamel if left stuck to your teeth.
- ✗ Let children brush their teeth unassisted before age 8. Continue to supervise children under this age to be sure they are brushing correctly and using the correct amount of toothpaste.
- ✗ Wait for dental pain or a dental concern before seeing a dentist.