



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **When can my child start to brush his/her own teeth?**

Although every child develops manual skills at a different rate, by about 7 or 8 years old, your child should be physically able to do a *good* job using a toothbrush.

### **What if my child wants to brush on his/her own?**

While it is important to encourage children to brush as a part of the daily routine you will need to check to make sure they are reaching the permanent molars at the back of their mouth. Remember that the toothbrush must start at the gum-line to remove the sticky plaque.

### **When should I brush my child's teeth?**

Your child must brush twice a day. The best times for brushing are in the morning and at bedtime. You might find it easier to help supervise brushing and flossing at night, when you have more time. If your child uses a battery operated toothbrush, have a dental team member ensure the proper technique. Around the age of 9 your child can learn how to use dental floss to clean in-between the teeth. Your child might find a floss holder a handy tool to use.

### **The tops of the molars are hard to clean. Is this normal?**

Molars are designed to help us chew. The tops of the molars often have deep groves that are hard to clean. A plastic coating or sealant can protect the molars and make them easier to clean. The Machray School Dental Clinic provides sealants. Call 940-2090 for an appointment.

### **Should I worry about my child's teeth when they play sports?**

When children are involved in a physical activity they should protect their teeth by wearing a mouth guard. Mouth guards purchased from a sporting goods store are often less expensive, however higher quality mouth guards may be made by your dentist. If a tooth is "hit", have a dentist check it to be sure that it has not been damaged. If a permanent tooth is accidentally knocked out, pick it up (do not clean it) and call your dentist immediately. Most dentists have emergency after-hours phone numbers.

