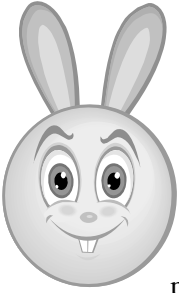


WELCOME BABY Newsletter for 11 Months

Dear Parents,



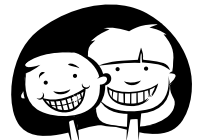
How about those baby teeth? Does your baby have some yet? Most babies start to get teeth around six months, but for some the teeth take until after the first birthday to come in. Can you believe that your baby is eleven months already? Any day now you will celebrate a first birthday! Perhaps a first tooth! Perhaps a first biting incident. What about chewing? What about a healthy mouth? What about talking? What about weaning? You are probably thinking about all of these things.

This is a time when everything goes in the mouth. Not that it hasn't been already, but now your baby probably wants to taste everything: toys, blocks, dirt, grass, your fingers, and whatever food you put in your mouth. You'll soon find you won't be able to sneak that little piece of chocolate anymore. Someone is watching. When babies are teething and beginning to babble a few simple words – most of which sound about the same, *ba-ba-ba-ba* – it's all about the mouth. It's all about watching how you speak, how you eat, how you brush your teeth. How you take care of yourself, what you say.

You are the model for your baby: we say this again and again. What you model, and how you behave, is as important for health habits as it is for speech, behavior, emotions and mental health. When we take good care of ourselves, we take better care of our babies. When we put on our seat belt in the car and have the expectation that our children will also buckle up, they learn how it's done. Three year olds will often yell out, "I'm not buckled in!" while everyone is trying to get into the car. Or they'll tattle on someone else, "He's not buckled in!" You know this if you have older children. Kids know what the rules are, and sometimes they are more willing to follow them than we are.

The same is true for developing good behavior habits. You set the standards. Because this is such an "oral" time, every baby tries to bite occasionally. Please, do not think it will help if you bite the baby back to show him how it hurts. Simply put your finger between baby's gums and firmly say, "No bite." Then re-direct baby to a more pleasant activity.

Because this time is all about the mouth, it is recommended that you schedule an appointment with a dentist. The guideline is "First Tooth, First Birthday, First Dental Visit!"



YOUR BABY'S TEETH *From Washington State, Department of Social & Health Services*

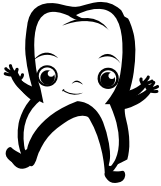
You have probably already been doing this, but wipe your baby's gums or teeth with a damp washcloth or gauze pad. This is the easiest way to clean your baby's mouth. When teething, your baby may have sore gums, be restless and cranky, not sleep or eat well, and have loose stools. Allow your baby to chew on something cold, a chilled teething ring or clean washcloth. Teething does not cause fevers, ear infections or long-term diarrhea. If your baby has these more serious symptoms, visit your doctor.

Parents often ask about "baby bottle tooth decay." This is serious tooth decay that often results in baby being hospitalized. A baby's teeth can be hurt if the baby is put to bed with a bottle filled with fruit juice, soda pop, milk formula or sweet drinks such as Jello or sugar water. Why does this happen? During the day, the baby swallows these drinks quickly, so the liquid does not stay on the teeth. During naps and at bedtime the sugary liquid pools around the teeth. With less saliva to rinse teeth during sleep, tooth decay begins.

Feed your baby before putting her to bed. Use a pacifier instead of a bottle for naps and bedtime. **If you must put your baby to bed with a bottle, use only water.** Remove the bottle after your baby is asleep. Do not be upset if your baby sucks her thumb or fingers. Most often this is harmless for babies and very young children.

Try not to let your baby walk around all day with a bottle of juice or milk. Constant drinking does not give teeth a chance to rinse off. If you are still nursing or considering weaning, you might want to begin teaching your baby to use a cup. By age one, babies like to use a cup – just as you do; it’s messy of course, but it’s fun!

As your baby’s teeth appear, brush them gently with a soft brush every day. Use only the tiniest bit of toothpaste (no bigger than one little grain of rice) and only after age one. Please, ask your doctor or dentist about fluoride. Fluoride is an individual choice and you’ll want good information.



BABY TEETH

Why is it important to take care of baby teeth? Baby teeth help your baby chew food properly; help your baby speak clearly; and guide the permanent teeth into place. Baby teeth help in jaw and facial shaping, and add to your baby’s good health. Baby teeth give

your baby a

beautiful smile!

KEEP THAT SMILE HEALTHY

These are the recommendations from the **ABCD, Access to Baby and Child Dentistry Program at Skagit County Public Health:**

- First teeth are important! Caring for baby teeth is the key to healthy teeth for a lifetime.
- Check your baby’s teeth. Lift the lips and check your child’s teeth at least once a month. If you see white or brown spots call the dental office right away.
- Start dental visits early! Dental visits should start by the first birthday.
- Clean your child’s teeth daily! Use a clean moist cloth or small soft toothbrush. Pay special attention to bedtime brushing.
- Use fluoride to make teeth strong! Talk to your doctor or dentist about this.

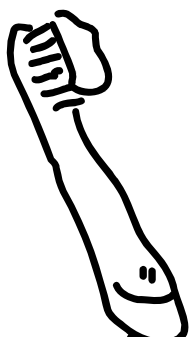
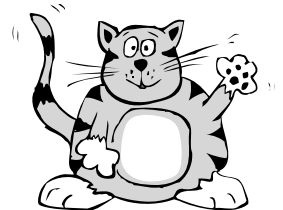


If you receive medical coupons for your baby, you may be eligible for ABCD, please call Skagit County Public Health for more information about dental care for your baby, 360-336-9380.

BABY SIGNS

What are Baby Signs? In their delightful book, [Baby Signs](#), Linda Acredolo and Susan Goodwyn say:

*“All babies learn to wave a hand for **bye-bye**, shake their heads back and forth for **no**, and nod them up and down for **yes**. These gestures are examples of Baby Signs – simple, easy-to-remember signs that babies can use to talk about things in their world that they don’t have words for yet.*



*In their great desire to communicate, babies often spontaneously figure out ways to “talk,” using simple signs that resemble what they are interested in, such a “panting” for **dog**, “sniffing” for **flower**, and “flapping arms” for **bird**. This is why we call Baby Signs a “natural sign language.”*

A very simple “baby-sign” is the sign for toothbrush. Simply move your index finger back and forth in front of your mouth as if you are brushing your teeth and say, “Let’s brush our teeth.” It’s as simple as that.

Babies don’t have the words to tell us what is bothering them or the words to let us know what they are seeing. Learning to talk takes a long time and it is a complicated process. Getting teeth is difficult, too. We don’t remember how much it hurt, but we do remember how much fun it was to wiggle a loose tooth; we remember the excitement of putting a tooth under the pillow for the tooth fairy. One little fellow was so thrilled to lose his first tooth, but so worried because he was spending the night at Grandma’s house. He needed to make sure that there was a note on the door for the tooth fairy. How else would she know where to go?

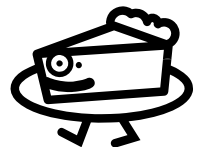
We want our children to speak well, to have beautiful smiles, to be able to communicate and to feel and experience all the love we have for them in our hearts. Having a healthy smile is all about having healthy teeth; we want the first tooth that falls out to be as healthy as the day it came in.

EVERYTHING GETS TASTED

Getting teeth doesn’t happen overnight and babies get fussy for much of the first two years while their teeth are coming in; meanwhile, everything gets tasted. Your baby probably has his pincer grasp working well by now and can pick up the smallest thing on the floor as he crawls along and get it into his mouth before you can cross the room. Sometimes it’s amazing that he has such good eyesight when you know you vacuumed just a few minutes ago!

This time of tasting everything comes with two parts. The first has to do with **safety and health**, and the second has to do with the **enjoyment of eating and tasting** new foods.

Your baby watches what you do, how you eat, how you take your pills, what you do with your food, where you put your pills away. Your baby watches you put toothpaste – probably lots of it – on your toothbrush and put it into your mouth. Your baby watches you drink hot tea and coffee, candy and hot salsa. Your baby watches you open your water bottle and will probably try to open it herself. It won’t be long before she can open other bottles. You need to know the **POISON CENTER** number:



The **Washington Poison Center phone number is 1-800-222-1222**. Someone answers the phone there 24 hours a day. If you call this number from another state, you will be automatically connected to your own state’s poison center.

Please copy this number down and put it on your refrigerator and into your cell phone. Curious babies can get into anything very quickly and you don’t want to take any chances. **Keep all medicines, cleaning supplies and chemicals well out of reach** – and remember, before long your baby will learn to climb. Even quite young toddlers can push a chair over and get up on it to reach the stove, sink, pills or liquids that you have left on the table or kitchen counter. The 10 month Welcome Baby letter talked about safety. If you didn’t receive that letter, please let me know and I’ll send it to you again, **360-419-3324**.

INTRODUCING NEW FOODS



What you eat and drink is what your baby wants. This is such a wonderful time for tasting that it is the perfect time for introducing new foods and flavors. You will want to check with your doctor first, and you can also call a WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program for more information about nutrition and feeding your baby solid foods. The Skagit County Public Health WIC phone number is 360-336-9392.

There are certain foods you do not want to give your baby yet: peanuts and peanut butter, egg whites, honey, or cow’s milk. Baby’s digestive and immune systems are not ready for these foods. They can cause serious allergic reactions in young babies. Read the labels on food packages, especially now with all the product recalls! The guideline is one new food a week; this way you can see how your baby responds to the new food. Because your baby wants to taste everything, including the underside of the front hall rug, putting a piece of avocado or a fresh blueberry on her highchair tray, shouldn’t be



too much of a shock. If nothing else, she can squish it in her fingers, get a little bit in her mouth, make a funny face – and ask for more. The Baby Sign for “more” is so simple: Tap your fingertips together and say, “More?” “More blueberries?”

One important part of offering your baby new foods is so that he can experience the different flavors and textures of things that are good for him. The “texture” of applesauce is very different from the texture of a piece apple. The texture of broccoli is very different from the texture of peas or carrots or squash. Why are these differences important? For young children we want them to have a large variety of foods to enjoy. The “more colorful” a meal is, the more nutritious it is. (This does not include “fruit loops,” no offense intended). We want children to enjoy green, yellow, orange and red vegetables; and purple, red, yellow, green and blue fruits. All of these contain different nutrients important for healthy bones, teeth, eyes, muscles and tissues. If your baby is tasting everything in sight with his mouth wide open, why wouldn’t he like to try some slippery mango?

PEEK-A-BOO, I SEE YOU!



This is such a lovely time to begin little games of Peek-a-Boo with your baby. Here’s a little rhyme to chant while you are playing:

Bat, bat, come under my hat, and I’ll give you a slice of bacon;
And when I bake, I’ll give you a cake, if I am not mistaken.



RESOURCES

Baby Signs, How to Talk with Your Baby Before Your Baby Can Talk, Linda Acredolo, Ph.D., and Susan Goodwyn, Ph.D., Contemporary Books, Chicago, Illinois, 2003

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Medical Assistance Administration



Please join us for **Mother-Baby Play Time: Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 pm**, please call **360-419-3324** for more information. Dads are always welcome!

WELCOME BABY! is a parent education and support program available to families of all children birth to age three in Skagit County. WELCOME BABY! is sponsored by Skagit County Public Health, Skagit Valley Hospital, Island Hospital, Kiwanis, Rotary, Friends of Welcome Baby & Baby Talk and United Way of Skagit County.

Best wishes from Friends of Welcome Baby, watch for another newsletter when your baby is 12 months old.

Please let us know if your mailing address changes, 360-419-3324

www.welcomebabywa.org





Meredith Baker, © 2007

RESOURCES

Please join us for **Mother-Baby Play Time: Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 pm**, St. Paul's Church, 415 S. 18th Street, Mount Vernon. Call for more information or just come by, Dads are always welcome!

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Best wishes from Friends of Welcome Baby, watch for another newsletter when your baby is 11 months old.

If you can, please come sometime to our **Mother-Baby Play Time** (dads are always welcome!). **Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00pm** at St. Paul's Church, 415 S. 18th Street, Mount Vernon. Call for more information or just come by, we have a lot of fun and it's a nice place to meet other first time parents. Take good care of yourselves and enjoy your beautiful baby! ©

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WELCOME BABY! is a parent support and education program available to families of all children, birth to age three in Skagit County. WELCOME BABY! is sponsored by Skagit County Public Health, Skagit Valley Hospital, Island Hospital, Kiwanis, Rotary, Friends of Welcome Baby & Baby Talk and United Way of Skagit County.

Best wishes from Friends of Welcome Baby, watch for another newsletter when your baby is 9 months old.

www.welcomebabywa.org

If you plan to change your mailing address, please let us know at the same time you contact the post office so you won't miss a newsletter, 360-419-3324.

Enjoy your baby! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call us, your doctor or nurse.

Please visit our website: www.welcomebabywa.org

For first-time parents, we have a **Mother-Baby Play Time** (Dads are welcome, too!) every Tuesday afternoon from 2:00 – 4:00. This drop-in group meets at St. Paul’s Church, 415 S. 18th St, Mount Vernon, WA. Please call for more information or just stop by, **360-419-3324**.

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