



February is National Children's Dental Health Month

Healthy smiles, healthy children



Congratulations to our youngest, most Faithful reader
Liam Sallee
 who found Timmy on page 2 of Thursday's Press

Great job Liam!
 Stop by the Weakley County Press for your prize!

Sipping, Snacking and Tooth Decay

Many parents across the country will issue a common refrain at dinnertime tonight: – You'd better eat that—it's good for you! – There's another old favorite in the parental arsenal of dietary admonitions: – Don't eat that—it'll rot your teeth!— Now more than ever, kids are faced with a bewildering array of food choices -- from fresh produce to sugar-laden processed convenience meals and snack foods. What children eat and when they eat it may affect not only their general health but also their oral health.

Americans are consuming foods and drinks high in sugar and starches more often and in larger portions than ever before. It's clear that junk foods and drinks gradually have replaced nutritious beverages and foods for many people. For example, in the U.S., on average, individuals consume approximately 50 gallons of sugary beverages per year! Alarming, a steady diet of sugary foods and drinks can ruin teeth, especially among those who snack throughout the day. Common activities may contribute to the tendency toward tooth decay. These include – grazing habitually on foods with minimal nutritional value, and frequently sipping on sugary drinks. Consuming too much sugar can also affect your overall health, such as becoming overweight/obese, or getting heart disease or type 2 diabetes.

When sugar is consumed over and over again in large, often hidden amounts, the harmful effect on teeth can be dramatic. Sugar on teeth provides food for bacteria, which produce acid. The acid in turn can eat away the enamel on teeth.

Almost all foods have some type of sugar that cannot and should not be eliminated from our diets. Many of these foods contain important nutrients and add enjoyment to eating. But there is a risk for tooth decay from a diet high in sugars and starches. Starches can be found in everything from bread to pretzels to salad dressing, so read labels and plan carefully for a balanced, nutritious diet for you and your kids.

Source: American Dental Association.

Reduce your children's risk of tooth decay:

- Sugary foods and drinks should be consumed with meals. Saliva production increases during meals and helps neutralize acid production and rinse food particles from the mouth.
- Limit between-meal snacks. If kids crave a snack, offer them nutritious foods.
- If your kids chew gum, make it sugarless – Chewing sugarless gum after eating can increase saliva flow and help wash out food and decay-producing acid.
- Monitor beverage consumption – Children should make healthy beverage choices such as water and low-fat milk.
- Help your children develop good brushing and flossing habits.
- Schedule regular dental visits.

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Picture: Dr. Duncan with her daughter




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Mon. - Thurs. 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

We accept most dental insurances, including Blue Cross, Blue Shield, Delta Dental, and Care Credit




HELP US FIND TIMMY THE TOOTH!

Timmy is hiding somewhere in Thursday's Weakley County Press Help us find him for your chance to win a gift basket from one of our local dentists' offices!

Employees & family members of Weakley County Press/Union City Messenger not eligible to win.

ENTRY FORM

Name _____

Age _____

Parents _____

School & Grade _____

Phone # _____

Where did you find Timmy? (page #) _____

Entry forms due end of day Monday, winner will be announced in Tuesday's paper.