



**Integrated Community Paediatric Services  
Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service**

**Worksheet J**

**Teeth Brushing**

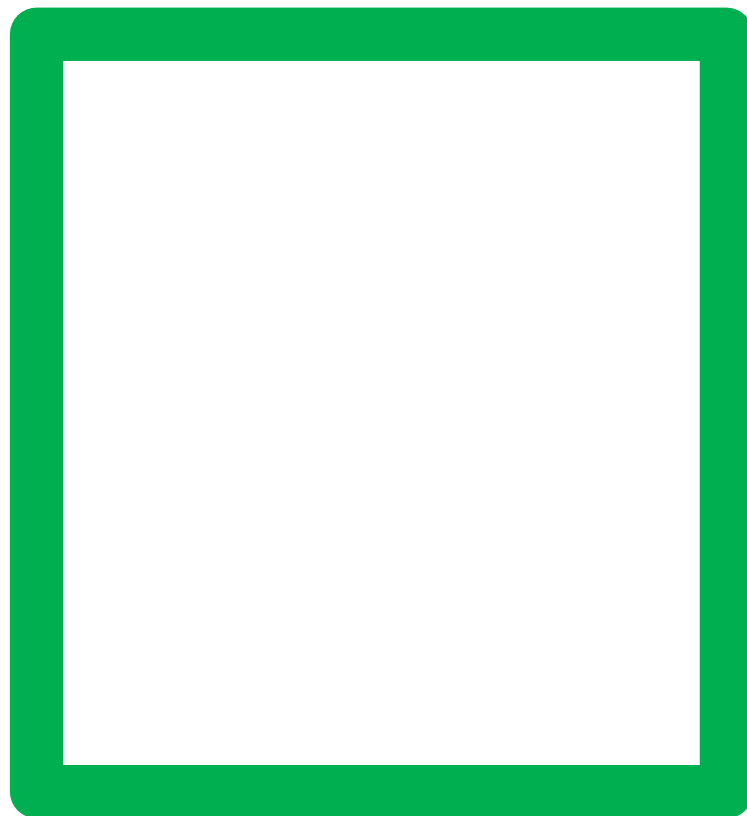
Area of Difficulty	Strategy	Tick when strategy has been tried and add comments.
<p>Child struggles to hold their toothbrush.</p>	<p>A toothbrush with a chunky handle will be easier for the child to hold.</p> <p>Battery operated toothbrushes often have novelty chunky handles.</p> <p>Offer hand over hand support.</p>	
<p>Child struggles to move the brush around their mouth to clean all of their teeth and struggles with the brushing movements.</p>	<p>Use a mirror. The child will feel more in control if they can see what they are doing, and the visual feedback will be helpful for them to orientate the brush in their mouth. A footbox/step may be required so the child can see themselves in the mirror.</p> <p>A finger toothbrush may be easier for your child to use and could be used to help them explore areas of their mouth outside of tooth brushing times.</p> <p><a href="http://www.boots.com">www.boots.com</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.sainsburys.co.uk">www.sainsburys.co.uk</a></p>  <p>Offer hand over hand support to help your child learn the movements and pressure require.</p> <p>Trying an electric toothbrush may be useful. The child will only need to position the toothbrush in their mouth and not coordinate the brushing action as well if this is too hard for them.</p> <p>Use a 3-sided toothbrush. This will help provide a more thorough clean.</p> <p><a href="http://www.sensodyne.co.uk">www.sensodyne.co.uk</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.drbarmans.com">www.drbarmans.com</a></p> 	

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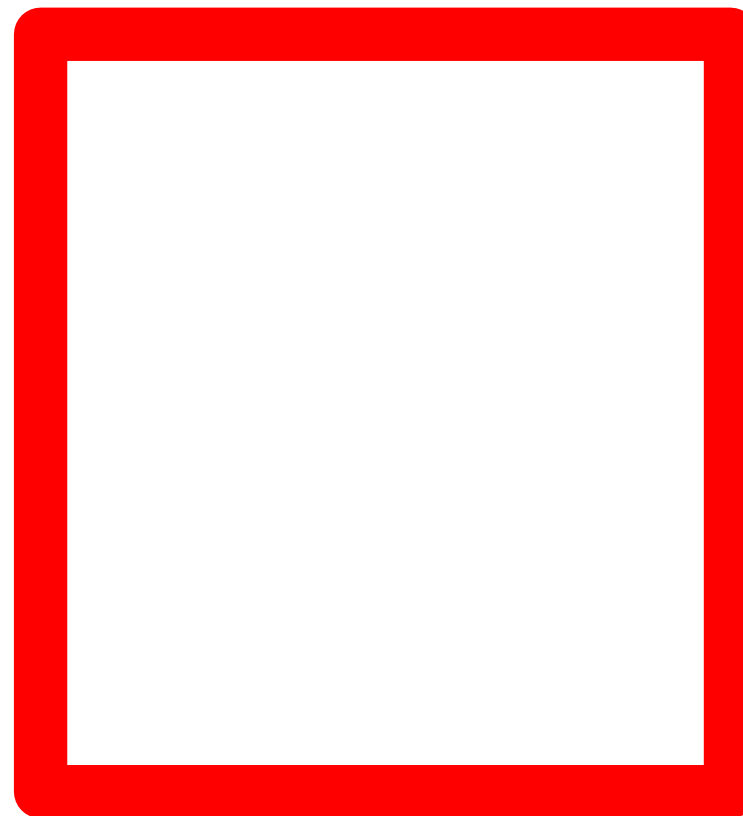
<p>Child avoids or dislikes cleaning their teeth.</p>	<p>Use a now and next board (<b>see “Now and Next” board below</b>) and a countdown timer on your phone.</p> <p>Make tooth brushing as fun as possible e.g. sing songs and use fun apps such as the free Aquafresh Brush Time app (see <a href="http://www.dentalhealth.org">www.dentalhealth.org</a> for more ideas).</p> <p>Singing songs or counting can be useful distractions but also help the child to see there is an end to the activity.</p> <p>Use reward charts, stickers and certificates to award achievements however small they may be.</p> <p>Consider if your child does not like the mint taste of the toothpaste. Use alternative or mild or unflavoured toothpaste. Alternatively, use a small amount of toothpaste at first, and build up as tolerated.</p> <p>Experiment with using cold or warm water to see which one your child prefers.</p> <p>Choose a fun toothbrush such as a character toothbrush, or one that lights up. The light can also be used to encourage the child to brush their teeth for the desired 2 minutes.</p>	
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***\*If you are concerned about your child’s dental health or oral hygiene please contact your dentist. If you do not have a dentist, please contact your health visitor.\****

***\*If you are struggling to financially afford dental products for your child, Boots stores are now offering free products for children under 5 years old. Visit your local Boots store to ask a member of staff about this. If you would prefer to discreetly ask for support and free dental hygiene products, visit your local Boots stores, and ask a member of staff to ‘Speak with Jesse’. The staff will be aware that you need free toothbrushes and toothpaste and will discreetly arrange this for you\****



**NOW**



**NEXT**