How can you support the oral health of children at school?

Promoting healthy school environments:

- Have a water/plain milk-only policy
- Have set meal times throughout the day to ensure a minimum 2 hour break between morning tea, lunch, and snacks to reduce sugar and acid exposure
- Encourage healthy, teeth friendly foods in lunchboxes and canteens
- Offer healthy options at school & community events.

Integrating oral health into the curriculum:

- Display oral health information
- Run an oral health lesson for children

Engaging families:

- Ensure that children are enrolled with Bee Healthy and direct families new to the region to enrol online
- Advise parents to contact Bee Healthy if they have concerns about their child's teeth or need to update their contact details after moving or changing their phone number.
- Know how to spot the signs of tooth decay and direct families to Bee Healthy for advice and treatment.

HE3411 | Version: August 2026 |
This resource is available from healthed.govt.nz

TOP TIPS FOR A HEALTHY SMILE

- Brush teeth with fluoride toothpaste for two minutes twice a day
- Spit, don't rinse after brushing
- Drink tap water and milk
- Eat snacks with no added sugar
- Have a dental exam every year. Dental care is FREE for under 18s

Scan the QR code for more information about Bee Healthy, access to oral health resources and online enrolment.

CONTACT US

0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)

dental@huttvalleydhb.org.nz

www.HealthNZ.govt.nz/BeeHealthy

ORAL HEALTH INFORMATION FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS



Dental care is free for children, from birth up to their 18th birthday.

Bee Healthy Regional Dental Service provides free dental care to children across the Wellington Region (Wellington, Hutt Valley, Porirua and Kāpiti Coast), up to the end of Year 8. This excludes accident-related dental issues (ACC), orthodontics and teeth whitening.

Children enrolled with Bee Healthy receive free yearly dental check-ups either at school in a mobile dental van or at one of our 13 dental hubs.

They also receive free dental treatment at the dental hubs if required.

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

Bee Healthy
Regional Dental Service

ENROLMENTS

If a child is new to the Wellington Region, they will need to enrol with Bee Healthy to receive free dental care.

Parents can enrol their child online at: www.HealthNZ.govt.nz/BeeHealthyEnrolOnline

Bee Healthy will then contact parents to book an appointment at a hub or the child will be seen next time the dental van visits their school.

Appointments can be booked by calling: 0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)

DENTAL EXAMS & TREATMENT

Most schools will have a dental mobile visit to provide dental exams for children. Occasionally Bee Healthy may not be able to see all children on the dental mobile. In this case, children will need to visit a dental hub for their check-up.

If the dental van does not visit your school, children will need to have their yearly dental exams by appointment at their nearest hub.

All follow-up appointments and dental treatment are completed at a dental hub. The Bee Healthy team will contact the family to book these appointments if required.

STAGES OF TOOTH DECAY



Signs of tooth decay may include:

· Chalky, white spots or patches
· Yellow, brown or black discolouration
· Red inflamed gums
· Toothache
· Clearly visible cavities (holes)
· Abscess

APPOINTMENTS & REFERRALS

If a child has not had a free dental check-up in a year, has concerns about their teeth or shows signs of tooth decay, direct parents to call 0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583) for advice or to book an appointment.

Teachers and health providers can also refer a child to Bee Healthy if they are concerned about a child's teeth, or want to support a family to book an appointment.

PAIN

If a child is in pain:
Call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** directly to make a relief of pain appointment.

DENTAL INJURIES & ACC

Knocks to teeth are common in primary school-aged children.

If a child has an accident and injures their teeth or mouth, inform parent to contact a **private practice dentist** to book an assessment appointment to register the injury with ACC. Bee Healthy is not an ACC provider so cannot treat children with accident-related dental injuries.

Even if the injury appears minor, it is important to get it checked and register with ACC so that any ongoing issues are covered. Some providers may charge a co-payment, so it is worth ringing around.

