

Module 1: "Teeth are Terrific!" 8 - 15 minutes

Key Message

Teeth are important for eating, talking and having a nice smile.

Student goals

Upon completing this module students will better understand:

- Why their teeth are important.
- Why they are losing baby (primary) teeth and getting adult (permanent) teeth.
- That adult teeth need good care to last a lifetime.

Module Topics (with discussion points and questions)

1. *Why we need teeth.* Today we are going to talk about teeth. We may not think about our teeth very much, but they help us do a lot of important things. Let's make a list of things we can do better with teeth. [Discuss children's suggestions, which may include talking, eating or chewing, smiling, singing, playing instruments.]

ACTIVITY #1: How about frowning? Do you need your teeth to frown? Let's test it out. Turn to your neighbor and give a great big smile...Good. Now, give your neighbor a very unhappy frown...H-m-m-m. I guess you don't need teeth to frown! But since most of you laugh and smile a lot, your teeth are very important!

So now we know that:

Our teeth are important because they help us talk, eat and give us beautiful smiles!

2. *Number of sets of teeth people get.* How many sets of teeth do people get in a lifetime? Does anyone know? [If no one knows, ask if anything unusual has been happening to their teeth in the past year or so, and help them work out the correct answer.] Yes. People get two sets of teeth during their lifetime. Do you know what the first set is called? [Baby teeth, or primary teeth.] Does anyone know what your new teeth are called? [Adult teeth, or permanent teeth.] (Show *Primary Tooth Development* and *Permanent Tooth Development*.)

A person gets two sets of teeth during their life: baby teeth (or primary teeth) and adult teeth (or permanent teeth).

3. *The number and purpose of baby (primary) teeth.* Here's an easy question: When did you get your baby teeth? [When you were a baby!] Why do babies need teeth? [To learn how to talk and so that they can eat solid food.] Now I have a really hard question. How many baby teeth do children get?

Children get 20 baby (primary) teeth.

4. *Why children lose their baby teeth.* So why are you losing your baby teeth? [As children get bigger they need bigger, stronger teeth.] How many of you already have some of your adult teeth? That's most of you! How are your new adult teeth different from your baby teeth? [They are bigger].

We lose our baby teeth to make room for our adult teeth because we need bigger, stronger teeth to last the rest of our lives.

5. *The number of adult (permanent) teeth.* Would anyone like to guess how many adult teeth people get? It's a lot more than the 20 baby teeth. [Thirty-two.] (Teachers may want to discuss losing primary teeth and getting permanent teeth in more detail. Visit www.adacatalog.org for additional resources.)

You will have 32 adult (permanent) teeth.

6. *How long adult teeth should last.* How many years will you have your adult teeth? [Discuss answers.] Many people live to be 80 years old, or older. If all of their teeth have grown in by the time they are 18, then that means that they will need their adult teeth for at least 62 more years! That's a very long time.

Your adult teeth are made to last for your whole adult life if you take good care of them.

Summary: *Teeth are a very important part of our bodies. They help us talk properly, chew our food and have a nice smile.*



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