

Communications toolkit

Be Smile Smart

(V1 16/3/26)

The North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) has developed the following communications toolkit to encourage the public to take simple steps to protect their teeth and gums. It is available for pharmacies, GP practices, urgent dental access centres, health partners, local authorities, and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector to use and share on their websites and social media channels.

Download the digital toolkit here:

<https://www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/toolkits/be-smile-smart>

Background

As part of its [Oral Health and Dental Strategy 2025-27](#), the ICB has committed to improving oral health and access to NHS dental services across the region.

It has invested £2 million in initiatives that keep gums and teeth healthy and prevent dental decay.

The Be Smile Smart campaign aims to support this investment by increasing general awareness of the small steps people can take to protect their teeth and gums:

- Brushing teeth for two minutes twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste
- Spitting not rinsing after brushing to get the full benefits of fluoride
- Swapping sugary treats for healthy snacks and drinks
- Stopping smoking and drinking less alcohol

The campaign targets adults and parents/carers of children.

This is the soft launch of the campaign so that we can begin to use the toolkit from World Oral Health Day on 20th March 2026.

A full campaign toolkit, supported by a regional media buy and PR plan, will be launched in April/May 2026.

There is a resource library at the end of this toolkit that includes web pages, videos, tools and guidance that can be shared as part of this campaign.

Your support in helping us share these messages is very much appreciated.

For further advice on using this toolkit or if you need support to tailor assets, please contact Dawn McGuigan, d.mcguigan@nhs.net

Resources available in this toolkit -

<https://www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/toolkits/be-smile-smart>

- Website and newsletter copy
- Social media messaging and visuals
- Animation
- Posters

Website and newsletter copy

Be Smile Smart – take simple steps to protect your teeth and gums

Poor oral health can cause tooth decay, tooth loss, bad breath and even oral cancer.

It can have a huge impact on your life, affecting everything from your ability to eat, breathe and speak to your self-confidence, employment and social life.

We know that dental decay rates double between the ages of 3 and 5 in the North East and North Cumbria, meaning that many childhoods are marred by dental pain and discomfort.

But there are some simple steps you can take to create a daily routine that protects your teeth and gums from disease and decay, and helps your children to learn great oral health habits for life.

Be Smile Smart by:

- **Swapping the sugar** – reduce the sugar in your diet by swapping sugary treats and drinks for healthier options
- **Brushing twice a day** – brush your teeth twice a day for two minutes with a fluoride toothpaste that strengthens tooth enamel
- **Spitting not rinsing after brushing** – spit out excess toothpaste after brushing instead of rinsing your mouth to get the full benefits of fluoride

Adults should also stop smoking and drink less alcohol to avoid getting stained teeth and increasing the risks of enamel erosion, gum disease, and even mouth cancer.

For tips and information on protecting your teeth and gums, visit:

<https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/nhs-dentistry>

Social media messaging - please tag us in your social media posts

Facebook - NorthEastandNorthCumbriaNHS

X – @NENC_NHS

Instagram – nenc_nhs

TikTok - @nenc_icb

Linked-In - @north-east-and-north-cumbria-nhs

YouTube - North East and North Cumbria NHS

Please note: for the purposes of this toolkit, the call-to-action link has been included in the drafted posts. You may also choose to include this link in your social media bio.

World Oral Health Day messages for Friday 20th March

<p>Audience: Adults</p>	<p>Be Smile Smart this World Oral Health Day by taking simple steps to protect your teeth and gums.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brush your teeth for two minutes twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste. Brush before bed and one other time during the day. 2. Spit don't rinse excess toothpaste after brushing to get the full enamel-strengthening benefits of fluoride. 3. Swap sugary treats and drinks for healthier options. 4. Stop smoking and drink less alcohol to reduce teeth staining and cut the risk of gum disease, tooth erosion and even mouth cancer. <p>Find out more: https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry</p> <p>#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth #WorldOralHealthDay</p>	<p>Animation:</p> 
<p>Audience: Parents/ carers of children aged 0-7</p>	<p>This World Oral Health Day we're encouraging everyone to Be Smile Smart by taking simple steps to protect their teeth and gums.</p>	

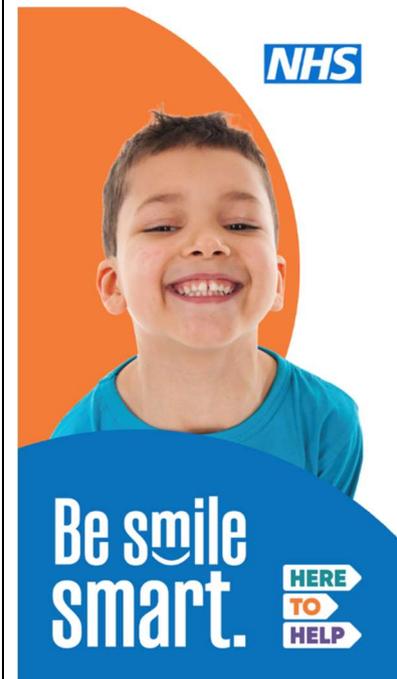
Here are 3 ways you can set up your kids with great oral health habits for life:

1. Brush teeth for two minutes twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste. Brush before bed and one other time during the day.
2. Spit don't rinse excess toothpaste after brushing to get the full enamel-strengthening benefits of fluoride.
3. Swap sugary treats and drinks for healthier options, milk and water.

Get more tips and sugar swap ideas at <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry>

#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth
#WorldOralHealthDay

Animation:



Be Smile Smart social media assets and copy

Audience:

Parents/
carers of
children
aged 0-7

Want to protect your little one's smile?

Be Smile Smart by swapping sugary treats and fizzy drinks for healthy snacks, water or milk.

Get sugar swap ideas at
<https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry>

#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth



Audience:

Parents/
carers of
children
aged 0-7

Be Smile Smart with this 3-step daily toothbrushing routine to protect your kids' teeth and gums:

1. Brush teeth for two minutes twice a day – before bed and one other time in the day.
2. Choose a fluoride toothpaste to strengthen their tooth enamel and prevent tooth decay.
3. Ask kids to spit not rinse toothpaste after brushing as fluoride keeps working its magic after the brushing stops.

Find out more:
<https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry>

#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth



Audience:

Parents/
carers of
children
aged 0-7

Toothpaste keeps working after the brushing stops thanks to a magic ingredient called fluoride.

Fluoride strengthens tooth enamel to prevent dental decay.

Be Smile Smart and ask your kids to spit not rinse after toothbrushing to make sure they get the full benefits of fluoride.

Find out more:
<https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry>

#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth



<p>Audience: Parents/ carers of children aged 0-7</p>	<p>Protecting your little one's teeth and gums is as easy as 1, 2, 3:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brush teeth for two minutes twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste. Brush before bed and one other time during the day. 2. Spit don't rinse excess toothpaste after brushing to get the full benefits of fluoride. 3. Swap sugary treats and drinks for healthier options, milk and water. <p>Get more tips and sugar swap ideas at https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry</p> <p>#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth</p>	<p>Animation:</p> 
<p>Audience: Adults</p>	<p>Cutting down the sugar in your diet is an easy way to protect your teeth and gums from decay and disease.</p> <p>Be Smile Smart and try these simple swaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fizzy drinks → no added sugar squash with sparkling water • Sugar in hot drinks → sweetener • Biscuits → whole fruits • Low-fat yoghurt → plain, natural yoghurt with fruits or berries for sweetness <p>Get more sugar swap ideas at https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry</p> <p>#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth</p>	
<p>Audience: Adults</p>	<p>Be Smile Smart by downloading the free NHS Food Scanner app.</p>	

<p>Parents/ carers of children aged 0-7</p>	<p>With a speedy scan of your family's favourite foods, you can find healthier swaps the next time you shop.</p> <p>Find out more: https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry</p> <p>#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth</p>	
<p>Audience: Adults</p>	<p>A simple daily brushing routine can help to protect your teeth and gums from decay and disease.</p> <p>Be Smile Smart by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brushing twice a day for two minutes. Brush before bed and one other time of the day. • Using a fluoride toothpaste to strengthen tooth enamel and prevent tooth decay. • Spitting not rinsing toothpaste after brushing to get the full benefits of fluoride. <p>Find out more: https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry</p> <p>#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth</p>	
<p>Audience: Adults</p>	<p>Be Smile Smart by choosing a fluoride toothpaste as part of your daily toothbrushing routine.</p> <p>Fluoride strengthens tooth enamel to prevent dental decay.</p> <p>It keeps working long after the brushing stops, so spit don't rinse excess toothpaste to get the full benefits of fluoride.</p> <p>Find out more: https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry</p> <p>#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth</p>	
<p>Audience: Adults</p>	<p>Did you know?</p> <p>Alcohol and tobacco can stain your teeth.</p>	

	<p>They can cause gum disease, enamel erosion, tooth decay – and even mouth cancer.</p> <p>Be Smile Smart by stopping smoking and drinking less alcohol.</p> <p>Find out more: https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry</p> <p>#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth</p>	
<p>Audience: Adults</p>	<p>Be Smile Smart by taking simple steps to protect your teeth and gums from disease and decay.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brush your teeth for two minutes twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste. Brush before bed and one other time during the day. 2. Spit don't rinse excess toothpaste after brushing to get the full enamel-strengthening benefits of fluoride. 3. Swap sugary treats and drinks for healthier options. 4. Stop smoking and drink less alcohol to reduce teeth staining and cut the risk of disease, erosion and even mouth cancer. <p>Find out more: https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/nhs-dentistry</p> <p>#BeSmileSmart #OralHealth</p>	<p>Animation:</p> 

Additional resources

These resources provide advice and information about protecting teeth and gums and can be shared with the public and/or stakeholders, partners and staff as part of this campaign.

Children

Content	Type	Source	Link
Free NHS Food Scanner app	Online tool	Better Health – NHS	https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/healthier-food-swaps/#fs-app
Sugar calculator	Online tool	Better Health – NHS	https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/sugar-calculator
Healthier food swaps	Web page	Better Health – NHS	https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/healthier-food-swaps
Healthier snacks for kids	Web page	Better Health – NHS	https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/healthier-snacks
Sugar food facts	Web page	Better Health – NHS	https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/sugar
Supertooth's healthy teeth guides	Video	British Society of Paediatric Dentistry	https://www.bspd.co.uk/Kidsvids
The Toothbrush Song	Video	Hey Duggee	https://youtu.be/oStaJTHgHMU?si=8UNxCAOdnrpGG_s7
Looking after children's teeth – a guide for parents and carers	Video	Brush DJ	https://youtu.be/SocsziPnk-E?si=1r94XQcgb7jO6sJT
Brush your teeth compilation	Video	CBeebies	https://youtu.be/Oj1Fx998sHc?si=EJqr4sCTJw1iXTGH
Oral health advice for parents and carers of autistic children and young people	PDF	British Society of Paediatric Dentistry	https://www.bspd.co.uk/Patients/PatientInfo
Information for parents/carers of children with special educational needs to take part in supervised toothbrushing	PDF	British Society of Paediatric Dentistry	https://www.bspd.co.uk/Patients/PatientInfo

Preventing tooth decay infographic in multiple languages	PDF	British Society of Paediatric Dentistry	https://www.bspd.co.uk/Patients/PatientInfo
A practical guide to children's teeth	PDF	British Society of Paediatric Dentistry	https://www.bspd.co.uk/Patients/PatientInfo
Teens' teeth	Web page	Oral Health Foundation	https://www.dentalhealth.org/teens-teeth
How to take care of your baby or toddler's teeth	Web page Video	Best Start in Life – NHS	https://www.nhs.uk/best-start-in-life/how-to-take-care-of-your-baby-or-toddlers-teeth

Adults

Content	Type	Source	Link
Diet and my teeth	Web page	Oral Health Foundation	https://www.dentalhealth.org/diet-and-my-teeth
Fluoride facts	Web page	Oral Health Foundation	https://www.dentalhealth.org/fluoride
Oral care products guide	Web page	Oral Health Foundation	https://www.dentalhealth.org/oral-care-products
Smoking and oral health	Web page	Oral Health Foundation	https://www.dentalhealth.org/smoking-and-oral-health
Advice and guidance on reducing sugar in your diet	Web page	British Heart Foundation	https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/nutrition/sugar-salt-and-fat
Advice and guidance to stop smoking	Web page Video Social media resources	Fresh	https://www.freshquit.co.uk
Maggie's story – mouth cancer	Video	Fresh	https://youtu.be/S0FfwJJtRow?si=7vLOOXOAWiL9C3sl
Smoking and oral health	Web page	Oral Health Foundation	https://www.dentalhealth.org/smoking

Advice and guidance on reducing alcohol harm	Web page Video Social media resources	Balance	https://www.fresh-balance.co.uk/balance
Alcohol and oral health	Web page	Oral Health Foundation	https://www.dentalhealth.org/alcohol

National and international oral health campaigns

You may also want to get involved in the following national and international oral health campaigns:

Campaign	Date	Organiser	Link
National Smile Month	11 th May – 11 th June 2026	Oral Health Foundation	https://www.dentalhealth.org/smile50
Mouth Cancer Action Month	November	Oral Health Foundation	https://www.dentalhealth.org/mouthcancer
World Oral Health Day	March	FDI World Dental Federation	https://www.worldoralhealthday.org