

wellness & you

Your Aetna Better Health® Kids member newsletter



Better brushing, fewer battles

Daily brushing is key to keeping your child’s smile cavity-free. Try these tips to help get your child in the habit.

Cavities in kids are more common than you might think. They can start as early as age 1. And by age 8, more than half of children have had at least one cavity.

Helping children develop good brushing habits early is an important way for them to avoid

cavities. But sometimes it’s easier said than done. For some families, getting a child to brush their teeth can be a real struggle.

Read on for tips on overcoming three common toothbrushing battles. Plus, learn how you can earn rewards when your child gets a dental check-up.

Brushing story continued on page 2

NEED TO RENEW?

You must renew your child’s CHIP coverage every year. Look for your renewal notice in the mail. Visit aetna.com/su24pa-1 or scan the QR code to learn more.



Brushing story continued

Brushing Battle 1

“I’ll do it later!”

Hearing kids announce that they’ll do something “later” is pretty common for most parents. And kids probably mean it in the moment when they say they’ll brush their teeth later. But it often doesn’t happen without an argument.

What you can do: Make brushing part of a routine. Have your child brush at the same time, twice each day. This way, it will be more likely to become a natural habit.

Brushing Battle 2

“I don’t like my toothbrush, and I hate toothpaste!”

Your child may not like the toothpaste you bought. Or they may not like their toothbrush.



But really, your child just wants some control. And this is one area where you can let them take on some of the decision-making.

What you can do: Let your child pick out the items they need for brushing their teeth. Set a budget and give them a chance to explore their toothbrush and toothpaste options.

Brushing Battle 3

“That was long enough!”

The American Dental Association recommends two minutes of brushing at a time, from age 3 through adulthood. But to a kid, two minutes can feel like forever.

What you can do: Looking at a clock might not cut it. There are other, more interesting ways to keep track of the time:

- **Get creative with timers.** Use a timer on a phone or a sand timer, which is a fun visual cue for kids. Or try an electric toothbrush with a timer. Your child can start using an electric toothbrush around age 5.
- **Sing along.** Playing music or singing can make brushing time more engaging, especially for younger kids. Make up your own song or find one online.
- **Brush together.** An older child may enjoy brushing their teeth along with you. You can track the two minutes together.

We’ve got your child’s smile covered

In addition to regular dental benefits, you’re covered for \$30 in over-the-counter (OTC) pharmacy products. You can use this to buy toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss and more.

Visit aet.na/su24pa-3 or scan the QR to learn to learn more.



Get a gift card for visiting the dentist

During our Summer of Smiles event, you can get a gift card when your child completes a no-cost dental check-up June 1st through August 31st.



How to earn your gift card

- 1 Schedule a dental check-up.** Don't have a dentist? Search our [provider directory online](#) or call Member Services for help.
- 2 Complete your dental visit.** This visit is covered at no cost to you.
- 3 Get your reward.** Rewards are paid after we get a claim from your provider.

Regular dentist visits help keep your child healthy. And now they can get rewarded for it, too.

Gift cards are available for infant, kid and teen members, 6 months to 18 years old, who complete a visit between June 1st and August 31st, 2024.

Questions about your gift card

When will I get my gift card?

Rewards are paid after we get a claim from your provider. Gift cards will be mailed four to six weeks after we receive the

claim. Only members who have Aetna Better Health® Kids as their primary (main) insurance can get a gift card.

How much is the gift card worth?

- \$25 for 6 months–12 years old
- \$40 for ages 13–19

What type of gift card will I receive?

Gift cards are reloadable and can be used at any participating retailer found on [mybenefitscenter.com](#).

**Some restrictions apply*

Can I redeem my card for cash?

No. Your card can only be used to buy allowed products at a store. However, the card is reloadable for future programs and should not be thrown away.

What if I have questions about my card?

To check your balance or see a list of participating retailers, visit [mybenefitscenter.com](#) or call **1-833-684-8472**. For all other questions, including gift cards not received, call Member Services.



Need a dentist? You can search our provider directory online at [AetnaBetterHealth.com/pennsylvania/find-provider](#) to find a dentist near you. Or call Member Services at **1-800-822-2447** for help.



Signs your child might need therapy

Kids can have a hard time understanding their emotions. And they may not know when they need an extra level of support from someone like a therapist. Here are some signs to watch for, and how to talk to your child about getting help.

Every child goes through rough patches. But when those strong emotions persist, and nothing you do seems to help, you may wonder: *Should my child see a therapist?*

It's a hard question to answer. Young kids often don't know how to explain what's wrong. So it's important to watch for changes in their mood or behavior that last for two weeks or longer. Notable signs may include:

- Dropping grades or trouble focusing in school
- An increase in temper tantrums or angry outbursts
- Regressions in behavior, like becoming more clingy or talking like a baby (more common in younger kids)
- Sleeping or eating more or less than normal
- Self-injury or self-destructive behavior
- Suddenly becoming less

social or more withdrawn from friends and family

- More unexplained physical complaints, like stomach aches or headaches

If you notice any of these signs, try to talk to your child about what's going on. It might not be easy to get them to open up to you. That's when bringing in a third party, like a therapist, can help.

You'll want to find the right therapist for your child's age and the issues they're dealing with. Try asking your child's pediatrician or a school counselor for suggestions.

Encourage your child to try seeing a therapist at least once to see how it goes. And remind them that therapy is very common. Lots of people find it helpful to talk through their feelings with someone new.

Get help in a crisis. If your child ever has thoughts about harming themselves or others, call **911** or go to a local emergency room. You can also call or text the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **988** for free and confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

ASK THE PEDIATRICIAN

How can I partner with my child's school to manage their diabetes?



The first step is to get to know your child's school nurse. "School nurses are fantastic. It helps to be on friendly terms and keep the lines of communication open," says Kathleen Bethin, M.D. She's a pediatric endocrinologist and spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Here's what else you can do to prepare your child for a safe and healthy school year:

✔ **Share your child's diabetes medical management plan.** It details everything from medications

and supplies to optimal times for meals and snacks. Check in with the doctor to update it yearly — or whenever your child's treatment plan changes.

✔ **File a 504 plan.** All public schools (and some private schools) are required to provide for kids with special health needs, including diabetes. "The 504 plan is the only way to make sure your child gets the services that help them stay healthy and safe," Dr. Bethin explains. It covers all your child's needs while at school, from eating when necessary to allowing teachers and other staff members to check their blood sugar and administer medications.

✔ **Teach the teachers.** Show your child's classroom teacher and other key staff how to recognize high or low blood sugar and administer insulin or glucagon in an emergency. Plus, tell them where to find your child's emergency supplies.

✔ **Be prepared.** Provide supplies for the school nurse, including insulin, a blood glucose meter, and glucagon. Pack an emergency supply kit for your child and make sure it's restocked when items run low. And don't forget to add some extra snacks.



Get healthy meals delivered to your door

Aetna Better Health® Kids has partnered with MANNA to provide a series of meals that are designed for children and adolescents who can benefit from a medically tailored diet based on certain diagnoses, such as diabetes.

This benefit includes a dietitian consultation, dietary education and meal delivery no matter where you live. For more info, call our Special Needs Unit at **1-855-346-9828 (TTY: 711)**.

Summer safety secrets

From picnics in the park to pool parties and baseball games, summer time means more fun in the sun. But too much time in warm weather can lead to health risks such as sunburn, heat stroke, bug bites and dehydration. Use these helpful tips to avoid any health troubles while being outdoors.

Limit time in the sun

Avoid sunburn by planning your outdoor activities when the sun's rays are less intense. This is usually before 10 AM and after 4 PM. If you are outside during peak sun hours, stay in the shade as much as you can.

Stay hydrated

Make sure your child drinks plenty of water throughout the day, especially if they're being active. Fruits and veggies are filled with water, too. Choose them if you're looking for a snack.

Dress for the weather

Choose light, loose-fitting cotton fabrics. Add sunglasses and a hat to protect your child's eyes and face from the sun.

Keep the bugs away

Remember to apply insect repellent if you're going to be outside, especially at night. For extra protection, cover up around grassy areas or standing water, where bugs like mosquitoes are most likely to be.

Pick the right SPF

Look for a sunscreen that's SPF 30 or higher and says "broad-spectrum" on the label.



This means it protects against both ultraviolet (UV) A and B rays, which cause skin cancer. If your child will be playing in the water or sweating, look for sunscreen that is water resistant. Remember, you can get sunscreen at no cost as part of your OTC benefit!

Apply sunscreen often

Put sunscreen on your child at least 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours or more often if they're swimming or sweating. Be sure to wear sunscreen on cloudy days, too.

Keep babies shaded

For babies under 6 months, it's best to keep them in the shade and covered with protective clothing. Babies' skin can burn easily. And they may be more sensitive to side effects from sunscreen.

Check medicines

Some prescription and over-the-counter medicines can make skin more sensitive to sunlight. Ask your child's doctor if any medicines they're taking might increase their sun sensitivity.



Keep your benefits at your fingertips. You can access your child's benefits from anywhere through the online Member Portal or the Aetna Better Health® app. Go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/pennsylvania/member-portal.html](https://www.aetnabetterhealth.com/pennsylvania/member-portal.html) to get started!

Healthier happens together

From back-to-school events to health fairs and health screenings, the Aetna Better Health® Kids outreach team is working to improve the health of the community. We hope you'll join us for the next event in your area!

Ready, Set, Explore Multilingual Literacy

Aetna Better Health Kids took part in WITF radio station's event celebrating language, literacy and learning. Families enjoyed interactive bilingual story times with WITF's Tia Flora and more.

"Championing health literacy and access to health care is an integral part of building strong communities," said Jerold Mammano, division president, Aetna Medicaid. "We're committed to collaborating with community organizations like WITF to provide essential resources to improve the health and wellbeing of families in Central Pennsylvania and across the state."



Look for the Aetna Wellness on Wheels RV in your community!

The Aetna Wellness on Wheels (AWoW) mobile health RV program provides a variety of free health screenings, education, activities and resources to every person, regardless of income, employment or background.

The mobile RV unit is equipped with bilingual Community Health Workers and resources in both English and Spanish. This program is geared to all ages and abilities to create a welcoming space where people feel empowered to take an active role in their health.

AWoW made more than 150 stops across Pennsylvania through 2023. In 2024, events will be hosted at a variety of locations, with a focus on reaching underserved communities.



Find events near you!

Visit [AetnaBetterHealth.com/pennsylvania/news-events.html](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/pennsylvania/news-events.html) to see a schedule of our upcoming events across the Pennsylvania Commonwealth.



Your back-to-school checklist

Summer break is a great time to get your child's key health checks done. Schedule these appointments before heading back to school:

- ✓ **Annual well-child visit.** School-aged kids should get a routine checkup once a year. They may need a physical exam to participate in sports or other activities too. Each child can get one Sports Physical each year in addition to their covered benefit of an annual physical.
- ✓ **Immunizations.** At the well-child visit, ask your child's doctor if they're due for any routine vaccines. Check with your child's school, too, to see if they require certain vaccines.
- ✓ **Dental cleaning and exam.** Experts recommend dentist visits every six months to prevent cavities and other problems.
- ✓ **Eye exam.** Your child should have their vision checked every one to two years. If your child wears glasses, they may need to go to the eye doctor more often.

*Your child's managed care plan may not cover all their health care expenses. Read your child's member handbook carefully to determine which health care services are covered. Call Member Services at **1-800-822-2447 (TTY: 711)** with questions about your child's benefits.*

How to choose a primary care provider

All enrolled children must have a primary care provider (PCP). You can find a PCP online using the provider search feature. Just go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/pennsylvania/find-provider](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/pennsylvania/find-provider) to search for providers in your area. Or, call Member Services and we can help you find a PCP.

You'll want to call the provider's office to make sure they are accepting new patients. Once you have chosen a PCP, call Member Services to notify us at **1-800-822-2447 (TTY: 711)**.

Need to change your child's PCP? Simply call Member Services and let us know that you'd like to choose a new PCP.



Learn more about your child's plan with your Member Handbook. Visit aetna.com/su24pa-2 or scan the QR code to view it online. Or call Member Services at **1-800-822-2447 (TTY: 711)** to have one mailed to you.