

# How Can Non-Oral Health Professionals Promote Child Oral Health?

## Oral Health



*Whole-body health*

## WHY IT MATTERS

### Poor oral health can lead to:



- Pain, infection, missed school, lost sleep
- Poorer overall health
- High risk of future decay

## What is early childhood caries (ECC)?



Early tooth decay before age 6 years



1+ decayed/missing/ filled primary tooth



White spots → cavities → infection

## What increases the likelihood of ECC

- Plaque bacteria + sugar → acid
- Frequent sugar intake
- Poor hygiene
- Enamel defects
- Inequalities in access to care and education
- Systemic health conditions: cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, autism spectrum disorder

## Clinical Signs

- White spots
- Cavities
- Swollen gums
- Bad breath
- Tooth loss



## The 5-Step Framework:

- 1 Ask**
  - Oral health history
  - Hygiene routine
  - Diet
- 2 Look for**
  - Dental plaque
  - Red gums
  - Clinical signs
- 3 Decide**
  - Is referral needed?
- 4 Document**
  - Record status, actions, and follow-up
  - Monitor over time
- 5 Act**
  - Give advice
  - Educate caregivers
  - Support hygiene & diet
  - Apply fluoride (if allowed)
  - Refer to dentist

Learn More: [fdiworlddental.org/educational-module-other-healthcare-professionals](http://fdiworlddental.org/educational-module-other-healthcare-professionals)