

Watch Cavities Form Before Your Eyes

A fun craft to teach kids about cavities



WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 sheet of red or pink construction paper
- 6-8 styrofoam cups
- Play-Doh
- Hot glue gun
- Yarn or string
- 1 old toothbrush
- Nail polish remover with acetone
- Dropper or syringe to put the acetone into

HOW TO PREP:

1. Turn the cups upside down in a wide "U" or mouth-shape on the construction paper. Make sure the cups are touching like teeth do.
2. Use the hot glue gun to glue the cups to the paper.
3. Place little bits of Play-Doh on top of and in between the cups to resemble bits of food caught in and around teeth.

WHAT TO DO:

Brushing Activity

Begin to brush the Play-Doh off the top of the styrofoam cups. This shows that brushing does a good job of removing debris on the surface of the teeth.

Flossing Activity

Begin to floss between the teeth where some of the Play-Doh remains. This shows that flossing in between the teeth will remove the debris that the toothbrush could not reach earlier.

Cavity Activity

Fill a dropper or syringe with a few teaspoons of acetone. Begin to place a few drops of acetone over each styrofoam cup. As the cup begins to dissolve and holes are formed, explain that when a cavity forms, it creates a hole in your tooth's enamel.

WHAT TO TALK ABOUT:

What is a cavity?

A cavity is a tiny hole that forms in your tooth.

Why is brushing and flossing so important?

If we don't brush or floss, the food we eat will get stuck in our teeth and "sugar bugs" will eat away at it and form cavities.

Why are cavities bad?

A cavity means the tooth is unhealthy and can be painful for you. If a cavity gets too big, the dentist may not be able to fix it. When this happens, the dentist may need to remove it.

