



# Indigenous Teen Dental Habits to Promote Social, Physical, and Mental Health



Oshkaya'aaw Teca Shigáaga Míagaasha Théča kiŋ Ootítš Teens

Good oral health and healthy dental hygiene habits are important to maintaining your smile which is important for your social, physical, and mental health.

**80% of Indigenous teens (ages 13-15) have treated or untreated cavities.**

**53% of Indigenous teens have untreated cavities.**

## Promoting a Healthy Smile



Find a cultural advisor you can learn from about appropriate traditional tobacco use in your community and avoid recreation tobacco use like chew tobacco or cigarettes.



Wear a mouth guard while playing sports.



Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, and floss once a day. Brush before bed, and do not eat after this last brushing.



Visit your dentist at least once a year (preferably every 6 months).



Have your wisdom teeth checked by a dental professional.



Keep a balanced diet that mixes fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and dairy. Also avoid regularly drinking sugary beverages like sports drinks, soda, chocolate milk, and juices like apple or orange.



Drink fluoridated water from the faucet instead of bottled water. Bottled water does not have fluoride.



Reconsider any piercings in the lip or tongue. These increase the risk of oral infection and can chip and damage teeth. Any piercings should be cleaned after every meal so they don't harbor bacteria.