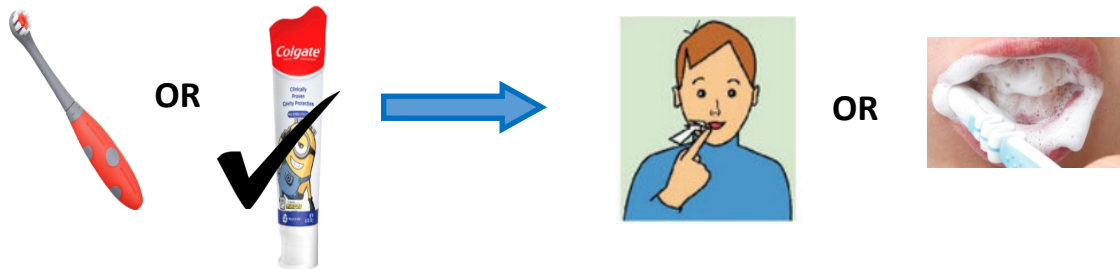


Helpful Tips for Reluctant Brushers

- Can your child say what aspect of toothbrushing they don't like? If not, try using a visual method e.g. drawing the toothbrush and toothpaste separately. Your child could then tick/point to the visual image. If for instance it was the toothpaste you could then branch the visual again into taste or foam etc. Hopefully this would identify the challenge.



- Mint toothpaste may be too 'spicy'- try an alternative flavour such as strawberry or a flavourless toothpaste e.g. Oranurse.
- Get your child involved in choosing their toothbrush e.g. one with their favourite character on/favourite colour.
- Trial a range of toothbrushes—electric, 3 headed toothbrush etc to find the perfect fit.
- Start small with regards to time - if they can only clean their teeth for 1 minute that is helpful, then continue to extend by 10 seconds or so once that initial short brush is comfortable. Use a toothbrushing chart to mark off this achievement, perhaps a certain number of ticks on the chart each week could mean a treat e.g. half an hour on a tablet, watching an extra episode of their favourite TV show, going to the park etc.
- Distractions can be really helpful - if they have a favourite tv show or game they like to play on a tablet, let them do this while cleaning their teeth.
- Change the setting, instead of toothbrushing in the bathroom, try it whilst they are sitting where they are comfortable.
- Desensitise the feeling of the toothbrush by having one to play with. Stroke the arms, legs, neck etc gently with it so that they become used to the sensation.
- Establish toothbrushing as part of the daily routine so that your child always knows when it is going to be. A visual timetable may help here.
- Role play toothbrushing when it is not toothbrushing time e.g. during play during the day. Your child might enjoy brushing a favourite toys teeth or their favourite person's teeth as part of play.

