**Introduction**

Bega Valley Shire Council education and care services are committed to encouraging all children and staff to exercise personal responsibility for positive dental hygiene and health. We acknowledge that children who are attending an education and care service will clean their teeth at home rather than at the service. Our procedures emphasises child and family education and modelling of good dental hygiene.

**Strategies**

Follow recommended dental practices

Educators will assist children in building good dental hygiene by:

- Ensuring dummies are regularly checked for wear
- Ensuring children only have a bottle for the period it takes to drink the contents
- Ensuring children have plenty of fruit and water during the day and have access to water after meals to cleanse their teeth
- Offering children milk or water to drink in preference to juices
- Including discussion about care of teeth into the program
- Encouraging families to make regular visits to the dentist from an early age

**Respond to dental accidents**

In the event of a dental accident for non-permanent teeth, Educators will:

- Contact the child's parents and seek emergency dental care following procedures for emergencies/ accidents
- Gently rinse the tooth or tooth fragments in milk to remove blood and place in a clean container or cling wrap to give to the family or dentist
- Document the event and actions taken following established reporting procedures.

If a permanent tooth is knocked out:

- Gently rinse the tooth or tooth fragments in milk to remove excess dirt and blood
- Handle the tooth by its crown, not its root and be careful not to rub off the tissue fragments on the root.
- Contact the child's parents and seek emergency dental care following procedures for emergencies/ accidents
- Advise the parent to consult with a doctor about the need for tetanus treatment.
• Document the event and actions taken following procedures for individual accident reports; reporting of serious accidents to Department of Education and Communities; Workplace Health and Safety reporting for BVSC.

References

• Australian Dental Association Online May, 2012: http://www.ada.org.au
• Bega Valley Shire Council Children’s Services, First aid and medical emergency policy, Operational draft, June 2012