Do you fight with your kids to get them to brush their teeth? Is a quick swish with the toothbrush all the brushing they think they need? Try six techniques that combat tooth decay, cavities and gingivitis while motivating your kids to enjoy cleaner teeth and better oral health.

**Start Early**

It's never too soon to begin encouraging a lifetime of good oral hygiene. As soon as your baby is born, wipe his or her gums with a soft cloth after every meal. This practice removes plaque and prepares your child for the toothbrush he or she will eventually use.

**Prioritize Dental Visits**

As early as age two, your kids can receive professional dental cleanings. The dentist inspects your child’s oral health and checks for cavities. During these visits, the dentist and hygienist also reinforce your training and talk to your kids about the importance of proper teeth brushing techniques.

**Let them Choose the Tools**

Like professional contractors use their favorite tools on the job site, your kids will be more inclined to brush their teeth when they can choose their own toothbrush and paste. Favorite characters, fun spin brushes and flavored toothpaste help your kids want to brush.

**Play Games**

Give your kids a reason to look forward to brushing their teeth when you turn it into a game. Try pretending the toothbrush is a train, and chug into the station that’s your child’s mouth. Or allow your children to brush their stuffed animal’s teeth or your teeth after they brush their own. You can also brush alongside your kids. Turn on dance music and march in place or wiggle while brushing.

**Use Rewards**

You don’t want to bribe your kids, but rewards can be great motivators as you help your kids establish healthy oral hygiene habits. Post a chart in the bathroom and let your kids place a sticker on the chart every time they brush their teeth. After a certain number of stickers, give them a special treat.

Treats can be a small toy, extra cuddle time before bed or a new book. Make the treat something that motivates your children and holds meaning for them. As they consistently brush their teeth, offer rewards less frequently until your kids don’t need an external motivator to keep their pearly whites clean.

**Model Good Oral Habits**

If you model good oral habits, your children will most likely follow suit. Prioritize teeth brushing and let your kids see you taking care of your teeth and visiting the dentist. Because of your good example, your kids are more likely to also prioritize oral hygiene.

Your kids can become faithful teeth-brushers. Even if they’re not initially enthusiastic or cooperative, six techniques give your kids the proper tools and motivation to brush their teeth properly every day. And remember, as you join in the fun, you instill healthy oral hygiene habits in your children.