TOOTHACHE IS ONE OF THE TOP FIVE REASONS CHILDREN VISIT THE SCHOOL NURSE, ACCORDING TO LOCAL EXPERTS.

TWO-THIRDS OF THIRD graders in Texas have cavities. Cavities and toothache can make it hard to focus. Cavities also require treatment that take children out of school. Instead of being in class learning, the child misses school time to have dental work done. Parents can help make sure their children's teeth stay cavity-free.

"Dental health is an important part of overall health," said Cindy Parsons, school nurse administrator with Keller Independent School District. "It can affect a child's school performance and well-being."

Because dental health is so important, children need to take care of their baby teeth. Baby teeth are just as important as adult teeth. They show the adult teeth where to grow and help children speak clearly and chew food.

Tonya Fuqua, DDS, dentist and director of Child Oral Health at Cook Children's, said that dentist visits are important. Children should have their first dentist appointment by age 1 or before if there are any concerns.

"CAVITIES AND DENTAL DISEASE CAN BE PREVENTED. MAKE SURE TO FOLLOW THE RULES OF TWO: BRUSH TEETH TWO TIMES A DAY FOR TWO MINUTES, AND VISIT A DENTIST TWO TIMES A YEAR."

— TOYA FUKU, DDS

FOR HEALTHY TEETH, TELL YOUR CHILDREN TO:

- Brush their teeth twice a day.
- Use a toothpaste with fluoride.
- Do not eat or drink things with a lot of sugar.

For more information, visit healthysmilesforkids.org.