



# Oral Health for Kids

Dental Health Information Series



## Let's Look at Teeth

This in-depth classroom discussion lets students take a closer look into their mouths to develop an understanding of the different types of teeth.

### Classroom Activity:

#### Baby teeth and adult teeth:

**Teacher:** What's the difference between "baby" teeth and permanent adult teeth?

Have a class discussion around the differences between these types of teeth.

Explanation: When you are small, you only need small teeth. As you get older and grow, you need more teeth for a bigger mouth and you need bigger teeth too.

- When you're between six and ten months old, you begin to get your "baby" teeth.
- The Central Incisors (front middle teeth) usually come in first (get students to point to these teeth), and then teeth begin appearing on either side and work their way back to the second molars (get students to point to these teeth).
- By the time you reach three years of age, you will have most of your "baby" teeth.
- When you are about seven years old, the Central Incisors (point to these teeth) get loose and fall out. Slowly a new, bigger tooth comes through, which is known as a permanent tooth. Your permanent teeth now grow and replace all your baby teeth. "Baby" teeth are important because they hold the place for permanent teeth and help guide them into correct position.
- When you have teeth, you can speak properly and chew things. Most animals have teeth: fish, sheep, elephants, horses and mice. Birds have a beak instead of teeth.

### Let's Look at Our Teeth

For this activity, teachers can ask students to bring in a small mirror to study their own teeth or students can carefully look at each other's teeth.

**Teacher:** Print the diagram of teeth that's supplied and give a copy to each student. Ask pupils to look at their own or each other's mouths and study their teeth – encourage them to look, but not to touch each other's teeth.

**Teacher:** Ask the class, what do you notice about each other's teeth?

Students: Discuss the shape and position of the teeth in the mouth.

- Your teeth look different from one another because they are designed to do different things (refer to diagram).
- The Incisors are the teeth in the very front. They're the sharpest teeth, built to cut food and shaped to move the food inward.
- The Canine teeth are in the corners of your mouth. Because they're meant for grasping and tearing food, they have very long roots. In some animals, the Canine teeth are so big they are called fangs. Students can be asked to think of an animal that has big fangs: Cat, Tiger.
- Premolars are located just behind your Canine teeth. Premolars have a more flat chewing surface because they're meant for crushing food.
- The Molars are the last teeth towards the back of your mouth. Molars are much bigger and flatter because their job is to chew and grind the food into smaller pieces.

For more information on oral health and looking after your mouth, visit [www.dentalhealthweek.com.au](http://www.dentalhealthweek.com.au)

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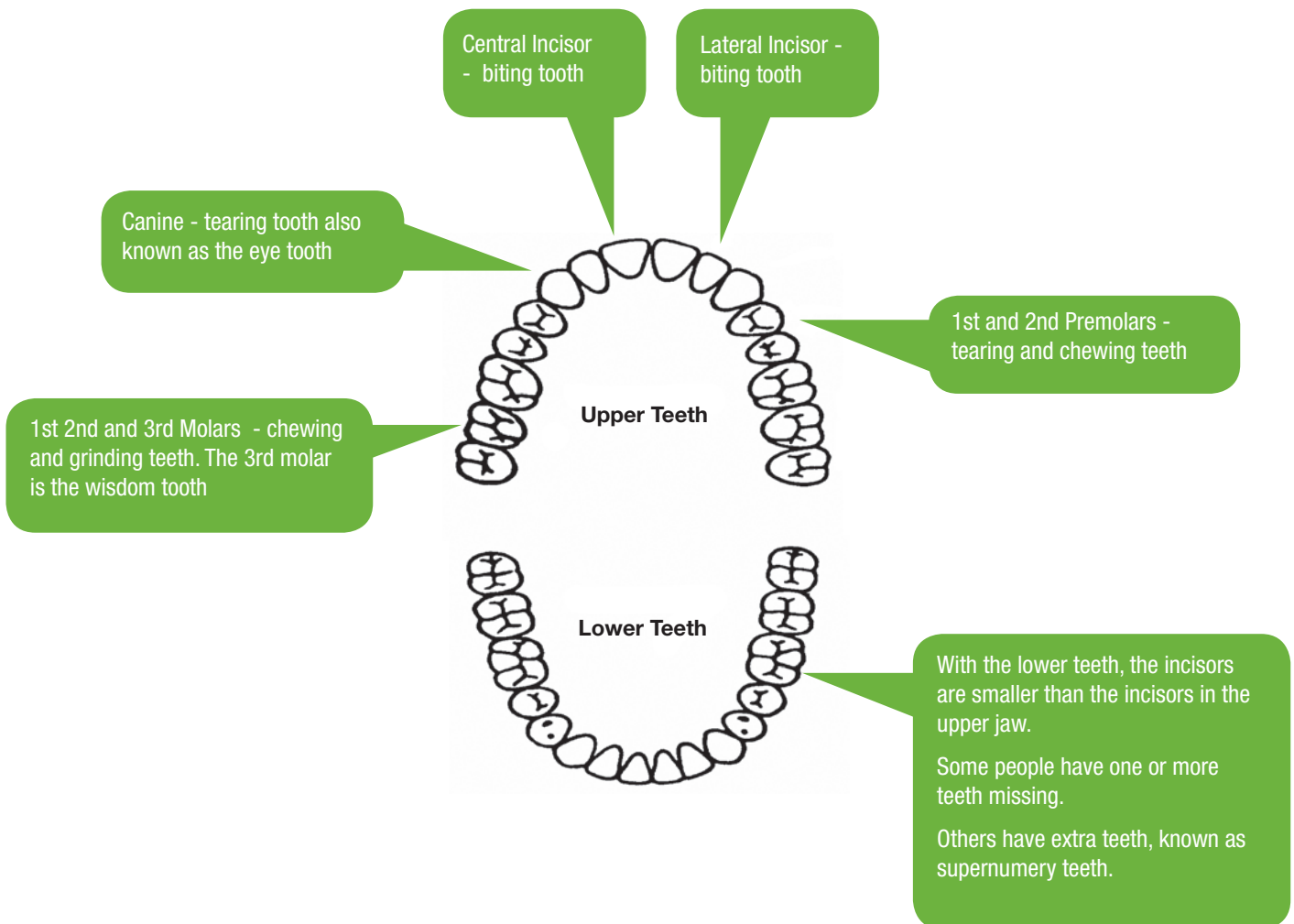
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## Tooth Diagram

You need to keep your permanent adult teeth for life so it's really important to brush your teeth at least twice a day and floss once a day. Visit the dentist regularly too to keep your teeth healthy.



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