



Spruce the Dental Health Moose



A Toolkit for Primary
Pediatric Care

A Program of



Updated: February 2026

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Meet Spruce the Dental Health Moose

Spruce the Dental Health Moose (originally introduced as Bruce by the Maine CDC in the 1980s) began as a campaign to promote healthy oral care habits for children. In May of 2023, Spruce was relaunched by From the First Tooth (FTFT) in response to pediatric provider's concerns about many families lacking the basic tools needed to establish healthy oral care routines at home. The program equips primary care practices with family oral health kits to be distributed during well-child visits. Each base kit includes a pediatric toothbrush, floss, two flavors of toothpaste, and multilingual educational materials.



Each kit sent to practices will contain the following:

- A pediatric toothbrush
- Floss
- Two trial size flavors of toothpaste: one mint and one kid-friendly flavor
- An educational bifold

When needed, age-appropriate toothbrushes are added in for siblings and caregivers, acknowledging the importance of the entire family's role in modeling good brushing habits.

Participating in the Spruce the Dental Health Moose Program

Participating in the Spruce the Dental Health Moose Program gives healthcare sites a simple and effective way to support early oral health. By bringing preventive oral health care into the primary care setting, providers can reach families early—often before a child has seen a dentist. The kits serve as a practical tool to spark conversations about oral health during well-child visits, while also giving families the tools and resources they need to make brushing a fun and consistent part of their daily routine.

Designate a Site Lead

Each site must identify a site lead, which can be a physician, nurse, medical assistant, or office administrator. This person will serve as the main liaison between your team and the From the First Tooth (FTFT) program for Spruce-related communications.



The site lead will:

- Keep internal staff informed about kit availability and workflow integration
- Serve as the primary contact for program updates and site check-ins
- Submit evaluation forms and reorder requests when applicable
- Support sustainability planning as the pilot or project phase concludes

Communication Expectations

Maintaining reliable communication is essential to keeping your site actively involved in the program. If we are unable to reach the designated primary contact:

- FTFT staff will reach out to the site's **secondary contact**.
- If both contacts are unresponsive, we will make **two phone call attempts**.
- If there is still no response by the **final deadline**, your site will be removed from the active participation list to make space for others on our growing waitlist.

Participation in Spruce includes access to technical assistance and ongoing updates to help your team integrate oral health education and tools into everyday care. We ask that all participating sites actively engage in the program to ensure that families receive timely and meaningful oral health education and resources.

Program Timeline & Participation Expectations

Newly enrolled sites will receive an initial supply of oral health kits and additional toothbrushes. Each participating practice is guaranteed support for up to 3 years, as long as communication is maintained. Throughout this period, FTFT staff may contact your site periodically with updates, check-ins, or required information related to the grant that has provided funding for this program:

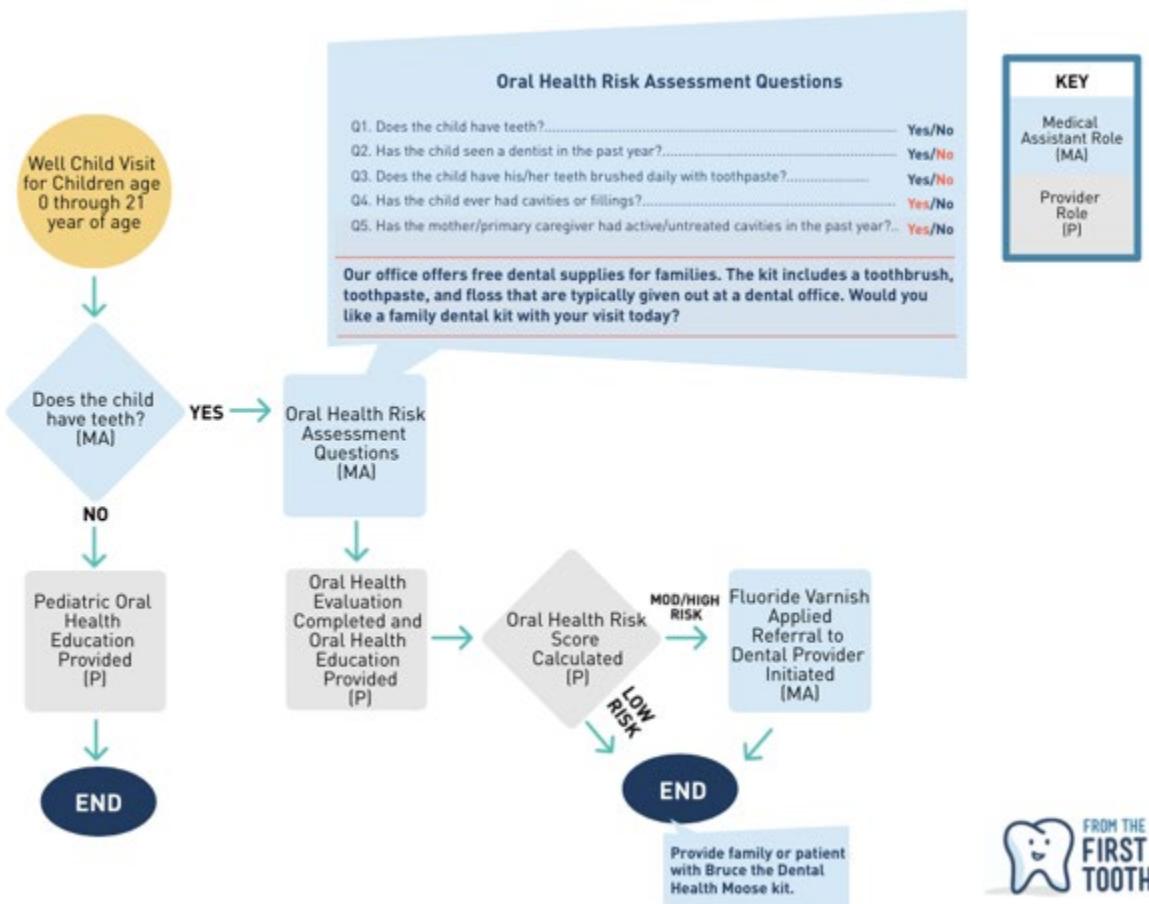
Initial Start-up <i>New practices</i>	Practices receive implementation information and inform staff on the availability of oral health kits	Initial order of Spruce kits are sent to health care sites
Months 1-11	Continue distributing kits	Check In An FTFT staff member will check-in half way through each program year to see how implementation is going
Month 12	Continue distributing kits	Evaluation An FTFT staff member will reach out and provide evaluation form

Integrating Spruce into the Clinical Workflow

The workflow below has been used by most participating practices and can be tailored to fit your staffing and patient flow. Please remember to complete the oral health risk assessment, provider evaluation, and apply fluoride varnish as part of the well-child visit. When completing the risk assessment, we recommend asking the following:

"Our office offers free dental supplies for families. The kit includes a toothbrush, toothpaste, and floss that are typically given out at a dental office. Would you like a family dental kit with your visit today?"

If the family is interested, ask how many additional toothbrushes they need and the ages of those family members.



Dental Steps Posters

To support this workflow, “Dental Steps” posters are sent to the practice at the start of the program. The poster contains a QR code that links to an oral health video series with short videos for each well-child visit from 2 months through age 5. Each video delivers one key piece of oral health information in a simple, family-friendly format to help close the oral health literacy gap. The best way to play the videos depends on what works for your practice. We recommend encouraging parents and caregivers to watch videos during the well-child visit between the MA room the patient and the provider entering the room. Other options include:



- **Waiting Room:** Display Dental Steps posters at visible locations so families can scan and watch the videos while in the office. Additional posters are available for free on the FTFT website.
- **At-home:** Encourage families to watch the videos later by scanning the QR code on the Spruce the Dental Health Moose kit bag, which links directly to the video series.

Additional Supplies

Each initial order of kits will include extra toothbrushes for other family members. These are packaged separately from the base kit and may require some assembly by your care team. Please refer to the chart below for toothbrush types and recommended age ranges.

Finger B Toothbrush (Transitional Toothbrush)	Children's Toothbrush	Adult Toothbrush
 A red plastic toothbrush with a large, open head designed for babies and toddlers.	 Four colorful children's toothbrushes with soft bristles and handles designed for young children.	 Five adult toothbrushes with standard handles and heads, available in various colors.
Appropriate for ages 0-4	Appropriate for ages 4-12	Appropriate for ages 12+

Note: Age ranges are approximate and should be guided by each patient's dental development.

Supply Refill

Practices move through Spruce the Dental Health Moose kits at different rates based on patient volume and workflow integration. To fairly and efficiently manage limited resources, we use a order request form system for kit reorders.

The ordering request form works as a flexible system that allows practices already participating in the program to request additional kits once their initial supply is running low. Reorders are fulfilled based on available funding and in the order requests are received. With this system, we cannot guarantee any certain number of kits or additional toothbrushes to be sent to your practice as funding is typically secured annually.

How It Works

1. Practices complete an [order request form](#), which can also be found on the From the First Tooth website.
2. Requests are timestamped and added to the reorder waitlist.
3. FTFT staff review available inventory and funding to determine which requests can be filled during the current cycle.

Practices are notified:

- If their reorder is approved and shipped
- If they are placed on a waitlist

Tips for Reordering

- Submit your request **before** your kits are completely gone to avoid a gap in distribution.
- Track how many kits and additional toothbrushes remain in your current supply to avoid having to place multiple requests.

Annual Evaluation Requirements

Sites participating in the program are required to complete annual evaluations for each year they receive financial support, for up to three years. These evaluations help assess program impact, identify barriers, and guide improvements to ensure the resources are meeting families' needs. In Year 1, both the site lead and a participating physician complete evaluations to capture early implementation experiences from multiple perspectives. In Years 2 and 3, the site lead completes a single annual evaluation focused on how the program is evolving within the practice. Year 2 evaluates progress toward deeper integration and workflow refinement, while Year 3 assesses the site's capacity to sustain oral health activities independently and identifies

any remaining support needs. Evaluations may include questions related to kit use, workflow integration, staffing, sustainability, and long-term planning. See below for sample evaluations:

Year 1

Site Lead Evaluation

- Please describe any changes in fluoride varnish application at your site since implementing the program. For non-MaineHealth practices, please include rates before and after participation if possible.
- Approximately how many kits, adult toothbrushes, toddler, and infant toothbrushes remain at your site?
- How were the kits distributed within your office (e.g., who distributed them, when, and how)?
- Please describe your practices overall thoughts on implementing this program.
- How were the oral health videos used or shared with families, if at all?
- In what ways, if any, did the kits influence staff routines related to the oral health risk assessment or fluoride varnish application?
- Would you recommend the Spruce the Dental Health Moose program to other pediatric practices? Why or why not?

Year 1

Physician Evaluation

- How, if at all, did the availability of the oral health kit affect your conversations with families about oral health?
- Did having an oral health kit available impact your confidence in providing oral health education? Please explain.
- Are you interested in learning more about additional preventive oral health tools or practices for use in primary care?
- Would you recommend the Spruce the Dental Health Moose program to other pediatric practices? Why or why not?

Year 2

Site Lead Evaluation

Purpose: To understand how the program is evolving in your setting and identify opportunities to deepen integration.

- How has your team refined or adjusted its workflow for distributing kits and completing oral health tasks since Year 1?
- Are there any new strategies you've implemented to improve consistency or efficiency?
- Have you identified any internal champions or workflows that have helped sustain the program?
- What barriers, if any, are limiting your site's ability to fully integrate oral health into well-child visits?
- How confident do you feel that your current workflow supports consistent risk assessment and fluoride application?

Year 3

Site Lead Evaluation

Purpose: To assess your site's capacity to sustain oral health integration independently, reflect on program impact, and identify any remaining supports needed for long-term success.

- How is your site maintaining oral health integration without relying heavily on external support?
- What internal systems, workflows, or champions are helping sustain this work?
- What barriers, if any, remain to fully sustaining the program independently?
- What has been the most lasting impact of the Spruce the Dental Health Moose program at your site?
- What lessons or best practices would you share with new sites beginning this work?
- How confident are you that oral health will remain a consistent part of well-child visits moving forward?
- Does your site plan to continue the program (without financial support of the From the First Tooth Program) beyond Year 3?

If yes, what supports or resources would help strengthen your sustainability?

If not, please indicate whether your practice plans to be re-added to the waitlist.

Continued Support

Due to high demand and limited funding, FTFT can provide financial support for up to **three years** per site, pending available funding. This allows us to expand access and welcome new sites into the program while still supporting oral health equity. After three years, sites are encouraged to continue using Spruce through independent ordering. Those unable to self-fund at that time may choose to rejoin the waitlist for future opportunities.

Regardless of funding status, the Spruce the Dental Health Moose bifold educational material will continue to be available at no cost and can be ordered directly through the FTFT website for ongoing patient education.

Independent Ordering for Ongoing Distribution

As your site concludes year 3 distribution, we recognize that some practices may wish to continue using Spruce the Dental Health Moose kits as part of their routine care. If your healthcare site would like to move forward independently—whether you're ready to continue without FTFT funding or are not currently participating in the program—you have the option to purchase kits and supplemental items (e.g., additional toothbrush sizes) at cost through Z-Dental: [Spruce the Moose - My Z Sonic](#). Our team is also happy to assist with sustainability planning, transitions, or any questions you may have along the way—please reach out to an FTFT staff member directly.

Request to Join the Program

Practices eligible to participate include Maine-based practices seeing pediatric patients and those within the MaineHealth system. If your site is not currently participating in the program and would like to be considered for future funding opportunities, please complete our [interest form](#) to be added to the participation waitlist. If you have any additional questions about the program or your waitlist status, please email: mhfirsttooth@mainehealth.org

Frequently Asked Questions

- How do I track the kits we distribute?
 - FTFT staff will track how many boxes of supplies are sent to your office. At the end of the pilot, when we reach out with evaluation questions, FTFT will ask you how many boxes of supplies your practices have remaining and FTFT will calculate the total number of kits and brushes distributed.
- My practice has run out of kits and additional supplies, how do I request more?
 - You may request additional supplies any time during the 3 year participation period by completing the [order request form](#) found on our website.

Please note that this program has set funding and **may not be able to accommodate all orders**. Practices are always welcome to order more kits directly from the distributor at cost. Please reach out to your FTFT site lead for more information.
- I ran out of some of my supplies and I've been waitlisted for more materials. Do I stop distribution entirely?
 - Please continue distributing kits and supplies as best you can with what you have available. Even if you're missing certain items, families can still benefit from the resources you're able to provide.
- Where can I find Spruce educational materials in other languages?
 - Spruce educational materials in additional languages (Spanish, French, Portuguese, Somali, and Arabic) are available to practices at no additional cost and can be found on the FTFT website.
- Are the kits only distributed to patients with MaineCare?
 - The oral health kits can be distributed to any patient, regardless of whether they have seen a dentist in the last year. Please see the suggested workflow document and oral health risk assessment questions above for guidance.
- My patient recently received oral health services through a school-based oral health program. Are they still eligible for a kit?
 - Yes, many school-based oral health programs do not provide children with toothbrushes.

