Paediatric Dentist in Melbourne | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/specialist-care/paediatric-dentistry/

Details:

A paediatric dentist is a registered dental specialist who focuses on the dental needs of babies, toddlers, children and adolescents. At Core Dental our specialist paediatric dentists work closely with our general dentists and dental therapists, so your child's care is shared across a team. We see specialist paediatric dentists at our Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Berwick and Epping practices, and we explain every step in a calm, child-friendly way.

What is a paediatric dentist?

A paediatric dentist is a dentist who has completed further specialist training in children's oral health and is registered with AHPRA as a specialist in paediatric dentistry. In Australia, that means a general dentistry degree followed by additional years of specialist study focused on child and adolescent oral health. Only practitioners with that registration may use the title Specialist Paediatric Dentist. You can check any practitioner on the AHPRA register at ahpra.gov.au.

What does specialist paediatric training cover?

Specialist training covers child psychology and behaviour management, how children's teeth develop, and how baby teeth influence the growth of adult teeth. It also covers recognising early developmental and orthodontic issues, techniques for treating anxious children and children with special needs, and sedation and general anaesthesia as they apply to children. Child-friendly communication and a reassuring clinic environment are part of the training.

Which services can our specialist paediatric dentists provide?

Our specialist paediatric dentists can provide:

preventive care focused on maintaining your child's oral health

treatment of tooth decay using child-appropriate techniques

fissure sealants to help prevent decay

management of children's dental emergencies, including dental trauma

Routine check-ups, cleans and common treatments are also available with our general dentists and dental therapists. See our children's dentistry page.

When might your child see a paediatric dentist rather than a general dentist?

Your child can be seen by a general dentist or dental therapist for general check-up appointments, and a general dentist can carry out general procedures. If a dentist or therapist finds a problem that needs more complex treatment, such as developmental difficulties or paediatric gum disease, they may

recommend a paediatric specialist. The same applies if a child has behavioural difficulties, for example linked to a medical, physical or mental disability. If your child is particularly anxious, a paediatric dentist can be a good choice, because these clinicians are trained to create a calm, child-friendly environment. It is never too early to see a paediatric dentist, and a referral is usually needed, so please ask our team when you book.

Who are our specialist paediatric dentists?

Our team page lists three Specialist Paediatric Dentists:

Dr Angel Babu , DClinDent (Paed) (Otago), who sees patients at our Caroline Springs and Carrum Downs practices

Dr Sarah Scott , BBiomedSci (Hons), BDent (Syd), at our Berwick practice

Dr Aish Kesava , DCD (Paeds), at our Epping practice

Specialist sessions are limited and can change. Recent session patterns have included Wednesdays at Carrum Downs, Wednesdays at Caroline Springs, Mondays and Thursdays at Berwick and Mondays at Epping, but please confirm the next available session when you book.

How do we help anxious children feel comfortable?

At Core Dental we believe that making the dentist a positive experience for your child is crucial to building good oral health habits. We explain what we are doing in simple words, go at your child's pace and encourage parents to stay close. Please tell us about your child's worries, past experiences or any medical or developmental needs when you book, so we can plan the visit and the time needed.

How much does children's dental care cost, and how can you pay?

Eligible children aged 0 to 17 may be bulk billed under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule at our clinics, and eligibility is assessed by Services Australia. For other treatment, we give you a written plan and quote before treatment starts. We offer interest-free payment plans through Payright for amounts up to $20,000 over 3 to 30 months with fortnightly repayments, subject to eligibility and approval. These terms were published as at September 2026, so please confirm current terms. HICAPS claiming is available on-site.

What should you bring and ask?

Bring your child's Medicare details, any referral and a list of medicines or medical conditions. Ask what the recommended care is intended to achieve, what the alternatives are, and what preparation and aftercare involve. If your child has a dental injury, call us on 13 13 16 and we will try to arrange an emergency appointment. For uncontrollable bleeding, breathing or swallowing difficulty or a serious facial injury, call 000.

What the state health advice says, age by age

Parents ask us what they should be doing at home, and at what age. There is a published answer to that, and it is more specific than most people expect. The Victorian Department of Health sets out a schedule of care, which we reproduce in its own words:

Age	The Department's advice

From birth	"Clean mouth and gums by wiping with a soft cloth"
First tooth	"Brush twice a day with a soft toothbrush and plain water"
12 months	"Take your child for their first dental visit"
18 months	"Add a pea-sized amount of low fluoride/children's toothpaste and encourage your child to spit out the toothpaste, not swallow and not rinse. Store toothpaste out of reach."
2 1/2 years	"Begin flossing between any teeth that touch"
4 to 5 years	"Start teaching your child to brush his or her own teeth"
6 years	"Switch to adult toothpaste and spit out, not swallow and not rinse. Start teaching your child to floss his or her own teeth."
8 years	"Allow your child to brush and floss unsupervised and continue regular dental check-ups."

Three details in that table do most of the work.

Brushing starts before toothpaste does. Plain water and a soft brush from the first tooth; toothpaste from 18 months, and then only "a pea-sized amount" of a low-fluoride children's paste.

Spit, do not rinse. It appears twice, at 18 months and again at 6 years. Rinsing washes away the fluoride that has just been applied, which is the point of brushing with it.

Supervision continues to about 8 years. The Department puts unsupervised brushing and flossing at 8 years, after teaching brushing from 4 to 5 years and flossing from 6 years.

On the first visit, there is a gap between this advice and common practice worth naming. The Department's schedule puts a first dental visit at 12 months. If your child is approaching that age, or you have a concern such as a dark spot, pain or an injury at any age, call us and we will arrange a visit. We would rather bring an appointment forward than have you wait, so ask us what we recommend for your own child when you book.

Source: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Teeth development in children, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (page reviewed 16 August 2023; accessed 4 November 2026).

Why baby teeth get treated rather than left to fall out

The most common question we are asked about children's dentistry is some version of: why treat a tooth that is going to come out anyway? It is a fair question, and the published answer is not about the tooth itself.

The Department of Health puts the reasoning this way: "caring for deciduous teeth is as important as caring for permanent teeth. They allow children to chew food comfortably and speak properly, while reserving the spaces in the jaws for future adult teeth."

That last clause is the crux, and the Department spells out what happens when it fails: "if a baby molar is lost too early due to severe decay, adjacent baby teeth may drift into the gap and create spacing problems for the adult tooth when it comes through." A baby tooth is holding a place. Lose it early and the adult tooth behind it inherits the problem.

The consequences of leaving decay are also set out plainly: "decayed baby teeth need to be treated by a dental practitioner", and if neglected they "can lead to mouth pain, dental abscesses (a boil or

swelling resulting from infected teeth), and problems with the surrounding teeth". The Department adds that "severe decay in baby teeth can affect eating and sleep, which can slow growth".

It is also candid about where treatment sometimes has to happen: "in some cases, specialist treatment in a hospital under a general anaesthetic is needed". That is uncommon, and it is a decision made after an examination, but it is one of the reasons early decay is worth catching early rather than watching.

For context on timing, the Department's figures: a child has 20 deciduous teeth by about age 3, and from about 6 years they start to loosen and fall out — though "it is perfectly normal for a child to lose their first tooth up to 2 years earlier or later than 6 years of age", with girls generally losing teeth earlier than boys, and the first usually in the front of the lower jaw. The first permanent molars arrive at about 6 years, "behind the child's baby teeth", which is why they are easy to miss.

Source: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Teeth development in children, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (page reviewed 16 August 2023; accessed 4 November 2026).

Frequently asked questions

At what age should my child first see a dentist?

We suggest a first visit from around age 2, and it is never too early to see a paediatric dentist if you have concerns. Early visits help children get used to the dental environment.

Do I need a referral to see a paediatric dentist?

A referral is usually needed to see a specialist paediatric dentist, for example from your general dentist. Call 13 13 16 and we will tell you what applies.

Can my child be bulk billed?

Eligible children aged 0 to 17 may be bulk billed under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule. Please bring your Medicare details so we can check.

Which Core Dental clinics have a paediatric dentist?

Our Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Berwick and Epping practices have specialist paediatric dentists listed on our team page. Ask us for the next session.

Will the paediatric dentist work with our regular dentist?

Yes. Our paediatric dentists work closely with our general dentists and dental therapists to manage your child's care.

When does the state health advice say a child's first dental visit should be?

At 12 months. The Victorian Department of Health's schedule of care says "take your child for their first dental visit" at 12 months. If you would like a visit around that age, or you have a concern at any age, tell us when you book and we will arrange it.

When should toothpaste be introduced, and how much?

At 18 months, according to the Department of Health: "add a pea-sized amount of low fluoride/children's toothpaste and encourage your child to spit out the toothpaste, not swallow and not rinse. Store toothpaste out of reach." Before that, from the first tooth, it advises brushing "twice a day with a soft toothbrush and plain water". The switch to adult toothpaste is put at 6 years.

Why does the advice say spit, don't rinse?

Because rinsing washes off the fluoride that brushing has just applied. The Department of Health repeats the instruction at both 18 months and 6 years — spit out the toothpaste, "not swallow and not rinse".

Are teething gels or amber teething necklaces safe to use?

The Department of Health advises against both. On necklaces, it notes a product safety statement warning of "possible choking and strangulation hazards", and asks parents "to consider other less risky ways of providing relief". On gels, it notes they commonly contain "8.7–9.0% of the ingredient choline salicylate", that salicylate is related to aspirin, and that aspirin is not recommended for children younger than 16 because of the risk of Reye's syndrome — "a rare but potentially lethal condition that can cause liver and brain damage". It also notes gels contain numbing medicines that are "difficult to measure", and that research suggests any relief may come from massaging the gum rather than the gel. Its suggested alternatives include gum massage with a clean finger or soft wet cloth, chilled (not frozen) teething rings, and paracetamol.

When do adult teeth come through?

The Department of Health gives these general ranges: first molars between 6 and 7 years, central incisors between 6 and 8, lateral incisors between 7 and 8, canines and premolars between 9 and 13, second molars between 11 and 13, and third molars — wisdom teeth — between 17 and 21 years, "if at all". By about 21 the average person can have 32 permanent teeth, though because wisdom teeth may never develop or erupt, "some people only have 28 permanent teeth". These are ranges that differ between children, not a schedule a child should be meeting.

Related services and further reading

Children's dentistry

Specialist care

Children's braces and Invisalign

Sleep dentistry

Endodontics

Oral and maxillofacial surgery

Orthodontist

Emergency dentistry

Dental payment plans

Dentists and registered specialists

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

Bulk billing for eligible children under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule.

We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday mornings, Sunday closed
Clinics	Find your nearest practice

Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is general in nature and is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

What is a paediatric dentist at Core Dental?

A paediatric dentist is a registered dental specialist focused on the oral health of babies, toddlers, children and adolescents. At Core Dental our paediatric dentists work closely with our general dentists and dental therapists.

Which Core Dental clinics have specialist paediatric dentists?

Core Dental lists Dr Angel Babu at Caroline Springs and Carrum Downs, Dr Sarah Scott at Berwick and Dr Aish Kesava at Epping. Sessions are limited, so confirm the next available session when you book.

What can a Core Dental paediatric dentist treat?

Our specialist paediatric dentists provide preventive care, treat decay with child-appropriate techniques, apply fissure sealants and manage children's dental emergencies, including trauma. Our general dentists and therapists handle routine care.

When does Core Dental recommend a paediatric specialist?

We may recommend a specialist when a child has complex needs such as developmental difficulties or paediatric gum disease, behavioural challenges linked to a disability, or marked anxiety. Our team will explain the reasons.

How does Core Dental help anxious children?

We explain each step in simple words, move at your child's pace and create a calm, child-friendly environment. Please tell Core Dental about your child's worries or needs when you book so we can allow the right time.

Does Core Dental bulk bill children's dental care?

Eligible children aged 0 to 17 may be bulk billed under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule at Core Dental clinics. Bring your Medicare details so we can check eligibility before the visit.

How old should my child be for a first Core Dental visit?

We suggest a first visit from around age 2, and it is never too early to see a paediatric dentist if you have concerns. Call Core Dental on 13 13 16 to arrange it.

How do I book a paediatric appointment at Core Dental?

Call Core Dental on 13 13 16 or book online at coredental.com.au. Mention that you would like a paediatric dentist, and our team will explain referral requirements and the next available session.