



# Dental Protocol

This protocol is intended to help dental professionals who are participating in the South Dakota Child Identification Program (SD CHIP). The South Dakota Dental Association is committed to providing professional volunteers to perform the ToothPrints® portion of that program. A dental professional is either a Dentist, Dental Hygienist or Dental Assistant properly licensed, registered or certified in the State of South Dakota.

## **Needed Materials:**

The ToothPrints® materials will be available at the site. Gloves must be worn and changed after each child has been tooth printed. 2 x 2 gauze pads will also be available in the event of an unexpected incident (e.g. exfoliation of a deciduous tooth). A dental water bath may be brought by professionals; however, a less sophisticated hot water pot with tongs will be available at the site.

Tooth prints are made using a thermoplastic material. The Tooth Prints® wafer is heated in the hot water bath until it is soft (about 140° F), and then it is inserted into the mouth of the child. The child is then instructed to close down hard and hold. When the wafer hardens the child is instructed to open his mouth, and the Tooth Prints® wafer is removed and placed in a provided zip-lock plastic sandwich bag. For younger children, the wafer can be adapted to their small mouth by pushing the pads together. Young children, less than 6 years old, tend to close their mouth VERY quickly. Therefore, the wafer needs to be placed in the mouth as quickly as possible so that if the child closes and then opens his mouth, the wafer can be removed and held vertically until it hardens. Upon completion, the tooth print impression which has been placed in the plastic bag is given to the parent.

Prudence should be used in the tooth print procedure. It is not worth forcing a bad experience upon an uncooperative child. Children under the age of three (3) are usually the most apprehensive, but it can happen with anyone.

**Note: No child wearing tooth braces is to be tooth printed.**