

# Oral Care – Responsive Behavior

## Huddle Talk #4

Care givers are reluctant to provide oral care because of many reasons:

- Not enough time
- Not the right dental supplies
- Fear of being bitten
- Challenging behaviors

### Oral Health & Responsive Behavior Strategies:

- Use your Gentle Persuasive Approach and Purposeful Interaction skills
- Develop ways to improve access to the resident's mouth: overcoming the fear of being touched, modeling, hand over hand, distraction, and/or alternative provider
- Engaging your residents senses! Sound, taste, sight and touch .
- Be mindful of your body language – ensure it's approachable.
- Establish effective verbal and non-verbal communication
- Treat your residents the way you would want to be treated. **It's not acceptable to skip mouth care** just because the resident does not request it.
- Take the time to figure out what is bothering the resident

Oral health is as important as skin integrity in protecting the body against infection. When this defense barrier is broken because of poor oral health, the bacteria in dental plaque can enter airways and the bloodstream causing:

- Pneumonia, Heart attack, Stroke, Lowered immunity, Poor diabetic control

