



## ROSALIE'S NEIGHBORHOOD:

# Let's Smile!



READERS THEATER



## Let's Smile! Readers Theater

### Cast:



Rosalie Stevens  
(grandmother)

Alisha  
(granddaughter, age 5)



Felicia Gonzalez  
(young, pregnant, married mother)

Luis  
(son, age 5)  
Carlos  
(son, age 6)



Ginny McMillan  
(young mother)  
Maggie  
(daughter, age 6 months)  
Donny  
(son, age 4)

### Notes:

- Each section includes activities from the *Let's Smile* Facilitator's Guide. Teachers are encouraged to use the "Before" and "After" questions from the *Let's Smile* Facilitator Guide, using the pages indicated. Activities will further engage parents and children in the content.
- After choosing characters, students may want to highlight their speaking parts. A change in speakers is denoted by BOLD or REGULAR print. Read the script ahead of time to have the simple "props" prepared.
- When a stage direction is needed (e.g. signs, smiles at Maggie, puzzled) the text will be flush to the left margin. Speaking roles only are indented.
- Encourage actors to pantomime (e.g. knock on a pretend door).



*Facilitator Guide: Before Questions, p. 10*

## ACT I, Scene I: Maggie's New Tooth

Characters in this scene: Rosalie, Alisha (non-speaking role), Ginny, Maggie (a doll)

*Ginny's house. Rosalie is approaching Ginny's house and knocks on the door. Ginny comes to the door holding baby Maggie (a doll).*

**Ginny:** **Hi Rosalie. I'm so glad you're here! We had a great time with Alisha while you were at work and we have some really exciting news!**

Rosalie: What's the news?

**Ginny:** **A tooth! Maggie finally has a tooth!**

Rosalie, *smiling*: Moms are always excited about things that happen to their kids for the first time. Let's see this brand new beautiful tooth!

*Ginny gently lowers Maggie's lower lip*

**Ginny:** **There it is! It looks so little in her mouth.**

Rosalie, *laughs*: Now that she has this new tooth, I wonder if she should go to the dentist?

**Ginny, puzzled:** **Me, too. I guess I need to find out about caring for Maggie's teeth. Rosalie, you've helped me and Felicia learn so much about health care. Where do you think I should go to find out about dental care?**

Rosalie, *thoughtful*: Well, the medical clinic knows about caring for teeth or dental care. You can ask them when you take Maggie for her next check-up.

**Ginny:** **She has an appointment for next Friday. Do you think it's okay to wait until then?**

Rosalie: I'm sure it will be fine. When you get back from the appointment, I want to hear all about it. We can talk about it when I pick up Alisha next Friday after work. We could invite Felicia to come and bring Carlos and Luis to play with our kids.



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**Ginny, smiling:** That's a great idea. I'll call Felicia and ask her to come. I like how you, Felicia, and I share what we learn about our children's health care. Maybe it's time for us to learn about oral health, too.

*Alicia enters, smiling.*

Rosalie: Well, I need to get home to make dinner for Alisha and Robert.

(To Maggie) Thank you for showing me your new tooth!

*Rosalie pats Maggie on the head, takes Alicia's hand, and they wave good-bye.*

END OF SCENE.

*Facilitator Guide: After Questions, p. 10  
Participants make concept map: see guide pp. 4 and 10*



### KEY CONCEPTS:

- Oral health contributes to general health.
- Early care for new teeth is important.



*Facilitator Guide: Before Questions, p. 11*

*Pre-print 1 Copy/Participant of “A Healthy Mouth For Your Baby”.  
See Facilitator’s Guide p. 11.*

### ACT I, Scene II: Caring for Baby’s Teeth

Characters in this scene: Rosalie, Ginny, Felicia, Alisha, Carlos, Donny

*One week later. Ginny’s house. Ginny, Felicia, and Rosalie sit on chairs on the porch.*

Rosalie: Did Dr. Green help you find information about a dentist for Maggie?

Ginny: Yes. He referred us to the pediatric dental clinic at the hospital. We have an appointment to see the dentist next week. I’m not sure what “pediatric” means. Do you know?

Rosalie: I know the word from my job at the clinic. It has to do with children. Children go to a pediatrician—a doctor who is trained to take care of children. So a pediatric dental clinic must be a clinic that takes care of children’s teeth. I’m sure that’s right.

Ginny: Even though Maggie has only one tooth, Dr. Green said I should start cleaning her mouth and her new tooth after she eats. He said I should clean her gums and teeth with a soft cloth. When she turns two, I should begin to brush her teeth with a special, soft toothbrush made for children.

Felicia: I know that toothbrushes come in adult and children’s sizes. But, aren’t they all soft? I didn’t know anything about taking care of my boys’ teeth when they were babies. Now I wish I had. But I’ll do a better job with this little one.

(Smiles and pats her pregnant belly).

Rosalie: Don’t blame yourself for things you didn’t know, Felicia! We’re all learning new things every day. When Ginny goes to the pediatric dentist, she can find out what we should do for our children’s teeth.



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Ginny: Dr. Green suggested that I write information about Maggie's teeth in her health log. That way I'll remember what to tell or ask the dentist. I never thought we should use the health logs we started for our children for information on their teeth, too. I started by writing the phone number of the dental clinic in the log. I also wrote the date that I saw Maggie's first tooth. I think I'll write the question about the toothbrushes so I don't forget to ask. I also need to check with the dentist about insurance. I hope they'll be able to help me.

**Felicia:** **Can I see your health log and how you write the information? Then I can do the same for my boys and my new little one.**

*Ginny, finishes writing the new information in the health log, as Felicia watches:*

I'm really eager for this visit to the dental clinic!

*Children off to side. Donny is shouting. Alicia is crying.*

**Rosalie:** **Oh no! I wonder what happened! I think someone's hurt.**

*The women rush to the children. Alisha is on the ground crying and Carlos is upset.*

*Felicia, shouting:* What happened?

**Donny, stuttering:** **Ca-Ca-Carlos was pu-pu-pushing us hard when he tagged us and he pushed Alisha down. Uh...Uh...I th-th-think she hit her mouth.**

*Felicia, upset to Carlos:* Carlos, why did you do that?

*Carlos cries, Rosalie looks at Alisha's mouth*

**Ginny:** **Felicia, do you worry about Carlos when he acts this way?**

**Felicia:** I do. I even talked to the doctor about it. I write about it in his health log every time he's aggressive. The doctor said it would help them find a reason for his behavior.

**Ginny:** **Well, I hope they find a reason. Someone could get hurt. Does the doctor think he's okay?**



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**Felicia:** Yes, he's okay. He's a little wild, but he's not mean. Juan and I talk a lot about how we can help him.

**Rosalie:** Thank goodness Alicia's teeth seem to be all right, but her lip is bleeding. (to Alisha) I think we had better get you home and rinse this off.

END OF SCENE.

*Facilitator Guide: After Questions, p. 11*



### KEY CONCEPTS:

- *Early care is important for new teeth.*
- *Health logs are important.*



*Facilitator Guide: Before Questions, p. 12*

*Facilitator Guide: Follow-Up Activity p. 11; Make 1 Copy per Participant of p. 17 and discuss.*

### Act II, Scene I: Maggie's Visit to the Dentist

Characters in this scene: Rosalie, Alisha Ginny, Donny, Maggie (a doll)

*Rosalie's kitchen. Three chairs and table where Rosalie and Alisha are seated. Ginny, Donny and Maggie approach and "knock" on the "door." They enter.*

**Rosalie:** Hi! How was your visit with the dentist?

*Donny, smiles and stutters:* La-la-look! I got a new toothbrush and I got a sticker for being good. I got to sit in a big chair while the d-d-dentist looked at my te-te-teeth. I got to use a mirror and could see all my te-te-teeth.

**Rosalie:** Wow, it sounds like you had a great visit!

**Ginny:** I have so much information for us to talk about. Shall we call Felicia and ask her to join us?

**Rosalie:** Yes! That's a great idea.

*Ginny, gets her cell phone:* Yes, let's see if she can come over right away. I think Carlos and Luis are playing at a friend's house today.

*Alisha and Donny exit. Ginny holds Maggie on her lap. Felicia arrives and sits at the table with the others.*

*Ginny, pulls out information booklets:* Dr. Lopez was wonderful with Donny and Maggie. She gave me a lot of really great information. Did you know that doctors recommend that you never put anything in a baby's bottle but milk, formula, or water? She also said you should never put a baby to bed with a bottle.

**Rosalie:** Really? Why? I used to let Alisha take her bottle to bed all the time when she was little.

*Ginny, looks at the booklets:* It can cause baby bottle tooth decay or nursing bottle mouth.



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**Rosalie, sighs:** **Oh... That doesn't sound good at all.**

**Ginny:** It's not good. It's tooth decay. Young children get tooth decay when they sleep with a bottle of formula, milk, sugary juices, soda, or sugar water. They all have sugar in them. Dr. Lopez said that you shouldn't give babies pacifiers dipped in any sugary substance, either. The sugar causes tooth decay. It can cause cavities to form in their teeth. And Dr. Lopez said toddlers shouldn't walk around carrying sippy cups filled with sugary liquids.

**Felicia:** **I'm so glad you told us! That's really important to know for my new baby. Can the dentist do anything about the cavities?**

**Ginny:** As long as cavities aren't too bad, Dr. Lopez can fill them. It's important to have your children see a dentist when they are very young—about a year old. They should have their teeth examined and cleaned by the dentist once a year. Sometimes the dentist may want to see them more often. We should also check for white spots on their teeth near the gums. White spots are early decay, and can be reversed. We can prevent cavities by cleaning our children's teeth and gums. But, if they do get a cavity, the dentist should take care of it right away, before the decay gets too bad.

**Felicia, surprised:** **You're kidding! Neither of my kids has had their teeth cleaned, and Luis is 5 and Carlos is 6 years old. All they have are baby teeth.**

**Ginny:** The dentist called them something else. Let me think... oh yes, she called them primary teeth. I'm learning that it's more important than I thought to take care of those primary teeth! Dr. Lopez said that dentists want to prevent children from having trouble with their teeth later. That's preventive dental care. It's the same thing as preventive health care but for your teeth. (Sighs) There's so much to learn.



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**Felicia:** Ginny, thanks so much! I've learned that it is really important for us to take care of our children's teeth and gums to prevent cavities. The things we do to care for our children's teeth are the most important part of their dental health. Well, I guess I need to make appointments for both of my boys so they won't have problems with their teeth.

**Rosalie:** I'll need to make an appointment for Alisha, too.

END OF SCENE.

*Facilitator Guide: After Questions, p. 12. And Parent/Child Interactive Activity*



### KEY CONCEPTS:

- *Dentist appointments start at age one.*
- *Sugary drinks can cause tooth decay.*
- *Preventive care is important.*



*Facilitator Guide: Before Questions, p. 13*

## ACT II, Scene II:

Characters in this scene: Felicia, Ginny, Rosalie

*Several days later. Ginny's kitchen. Women are seated on three chairs.*

**Felicia, smiling:** Well, I have some news. Luis and I just went to the dentist to find out about his thumb sucking. The dentist was very nice. Her name is Dr. Lopez.

**Ginny:** **Dr. Lopez took care of Maggie also. She's very gentle.**

**Felicia:** Yes, she is. Dr. Lopez said it's normal for babies to suck their fingers or thumbs. It comforts them. It's normal for young children, too. Many children suck their thumbs or fingers until they are three or four years old.

**Rosalie:** **But, Luis is five, isn't he?**

**Felicia:** Yes. The dentist said that it won't really be a problem until his permanent teeth start to come in.

**Ginny:** **When does that happen?**

**Felicia:** Most children start to get permanent teeth when they are six or seven years old. Carlos is six now. So, he should start losing his baby teeth....I mean primary teeth!

**Rosalie:** **So, do you have to worry about Luis's thumb sucking now?**

**Felicia:** The pediatrician at the medical clinic first noticed that Luis's teeth don't line up correctly. He suggested for us to go see the dentist. Dr. Lopez agreed with the doctor. Sucking his thumb is affecting Luis' teeth. She said he probably sucks his thumb often and with a lot of pressure.

**Rosalie:** **What can you do to stop it?**

**Felicia:** Dr. Lopez told Luis that sucking his thumb was hurting his teeth. She asked him to try to stop sucking it. Later, she told me that she didn't expect him to stop just because she asked him. She said that



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Luis might stop sucking his thumb on his own when he goes to kindergarten and he is around other children. Dr. Lopez knows how children can be!

**Rosalie:** **What if he can't break the habit by the time he's six or seven?**

**Felicia:** Dr. Lopez said that children start to depend on putting their thumb—or fingers, or whatever—in their mouths. It makes them feel safe. It is a hard habit to break! I will have to be firm with him. I don't think Luis even knows he's sucking his thumb most of the time. So, I'll try reminding him whenever he does it. Maybe that will help.

**Rosalie:** **That will get his attention, at least.**

**Ginny:** We'll remind him, too, Felicia, if you want us to.

**Felicia:** **Oh, thank you! I'm sure we can help Luis stop sucking his thumb if we work on it together!**

END OF SCENE.

*Facilitator Guide: After Questions, p. 13 and Follow-Up Activity on p. 13.*



### KEY CONCEPT:

- *Thumb sucking can cause damage to teeth.*



*Facilitator Guide: Before Questions, p. 14*

### Act II, Scene III: Alisha has a Toothache

Characters in this scene: Ginny, Rosalie, Alisha (*non-speaking role*)

*Ginny's kitchen. Rosalie and Ginny sit on chairs. Alicia sits off to the side reading a book with a teddy bear on her lap.*

**Ginny:** Rosalie, Alisha isn't feeling too well. She says she has a toothache. It really must hurt. She's been cranky all day.

Rosalie: Oh, dear! I wonder what started that?

*Alisha comes to the table dragging her teddy bear.*

**Ginny, looking at Alisha:** One side of her face looks a little swollen, doesn't it?

Rosalie: Hmm. Yes, it does. I guess we'd better get you home and we'll put a hot cloth on that jaw. Okay?

**Ginny:** Wait a minute! I don't think you should put heat on it.

Rosalie: Why not? I've always used a hot cloth for a toothache.

**Ginny:** I'm sure I saw something about that in one of the papers Dr. Lopez gave me. *Ginny picks up a folder. Let me look. I'm keeping information from the dentist in this folder.*

Rosalie: That's a good idea.

**Ginny:** Here's the information on toothaches. Look here, Rosalie. "Don't rub aspirin on the child's gums and don't apply heat."

Rosalie: Yes. I see. Well, I knew that aspirin wouldn't be a good idea, but, I'm surprised about the heat. What should I do?"

**Ginny:** Let's see what it says. First, have Alisha rinse her mouth with cold water. Then put ice in a gauze pad or a clean cloth. Hold that on the area until the pain dies down. You should make an appointment for her to see the dentist, too.

Rosalie: Isn't this something! It seems like all our children suddenly have to see the dentist. First, Maggie gets her first tooth. Then Luis goes to the dentist about his thumb sucking. Now, you tell me that Alisha should see the dentist about her toothache.



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**Ginny:** It's always something with children, isn't it? Just think about all we're learning about our children's teeth!

Rosalie, *laughing*: Well, I think we've learned enough for a couple of weeks!

END OF SCENE.

*Facilitator Guide: After Questions, p. 14 and Follow-Up Activity on p. 14  
(Do not need Ask Me 3 pamphlets).*



### KEY CONCEPT:

- *Caregivers and dentists can take care of toothaches.*
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*Facilitator Guide: Before Questions, p. 14*

### ACT III, Scene I: What happens during a dental check-up?

Characters in this scene: Rosalie, Felicia, Ginny

*Two weeks later. The three friends are sitting in Rosalie's kitchen.*

**Rosalie:** You know, I had never been to the pediatric dental clinic. Now I've been there three times for Alisha. First for her toothache, next to get her teeth cleaned, and then to get cavities filled.

**Felicia:** I've taken both Carlos and Luis to the dentist.

**Ginny:** And, I've been there with Maggie and Donny, too.

**Rosalie:** I don't know about you two, but I've learned a lot. I always felt proud that I knew about health care. But, I wasn't thinking about dental care.

**Felicia:** There's so much new information! Dr. Lopez even talked with me about how important it is for me to eat healthy foods and take my vitamins while I'm pregnant, so that my new baby will have healthy teeth.

**Ginny:** It is important! But I'm curious, did your children have x-rays taken? Dr. Lopez didn't take any of Donny's mouth. I forgot to ask her about that.

**Rosalie:** She took x-rays of Alisha's mouth. That was because Alisha had a toothache. Also, she had cavities from that baby bottle decay. Dr. Lopez said she takes x-rays only if she really needs them.

**Felicia:** The dentist asked me questions about Carlos' and Luis' overall health. Not all of the questions were about teeth. She said the information helps her figure out if the children have healthy teeth. Does that sound right?

**Rosalie:** Yes, Dr. Lopez asked me questions, too. It reminded me of the questions that doctors ask when they take your medical history. The information helps them figure out how to help you stay healthy. The same must be true for teeth and oral health.



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Felicia: Did Alisha get a fluoride treatment?

Rosalie: Yes. First, Dr. Lopez examined Alisha's teeth and gums. She looked at her jaw, too. Then, she cleaned and polished Alisha's teeth. Last of all she gave her a fluoride treatment.

Felicia: Both of my boys like the toothpaste that Dr. Lopez gave them to use at home. It has fluoride in it. The dentist said that fluoride keeps teeth strong and prevents cavities.

Ginny: Dr. Lopez told me to buy fluoride toothpaste. She said Donny is old enough to spit the toothpaste out. She showed him how to put a little glob the size of a pea on his toothbrush so he knows exactly how much to use, and she said I should supervise him when he brushes his teeth until he's about six or seven. But I shouldn't use it for Maggie because she is too young and she might swallow it. They can get too much fluoride that way.

Rosalie: We're lucky because the dentist also said that our tap water has fluoride in it. We would need to give the children fluoride drops or tablets if we didn't have it in the water. Dr. Lopez said that fluoride is one of the best ways to prevent tooth decay because it strengthens the tooth enamel.

Felicia: Dr. Lopez also showed us how to floss our teeth. Did she do that for you, too?

Ginny: She did. I'm supposed to help them floss their teeth until they are eight or nine years old. They need to floss between the teeth that touch one another. I guess I'm going to have to start flossing my own teeth. Dr. Lopez said I should try to set a good example for them.

Rosalie: She's right about that. It's not easy to change our own habits. We have to try, though. It helps us and the children stay healthy.

Felicia: Did Dr. Lopez talk with you about sealants?

Rosalie, perplexed: I don't remember. What are sealants?



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**Felicia:** Dr. Lopez told me that when Carlos gets his permanent molars we will need to put a sealant on them. Sealant is another way to protect the little grooves and cracks in the chewing surface of the molars where your toothbrush can't reach. Carlos will get his first molars any time now because they come in around age six. Permanent molars are very important teeth that should last a lifetime.

**Rosalie:** **Alisha's only five, but I should ask about Alisha getting sealants, too. Wow, we really know a lot about taking care of teeth now.**

END OF SCENE.

*Facilitator Guide: After Questions, p. 14. Download and make copies of "Seal Out Tooth Decay" from website: [www.nidcr.nih.gov](http://www.nidcr.nih.gov)*

*Facilitator Guide: Follow-Up Activity (virtual tour) p. 14.*



### KEY CONCEPTS:

- *Fluoride prevents tooth decay.*
- *Flossing cleans between the teeth.*
- *Sealants protect molars.*



*Facilitator Guide: Before Questions, p. 15*

### ACT III, Scene II: Mouth Emergencies

Characters in this scene: Rosalie, Ginny, Felicia

*Still in Rosalie's kitchen. Same day.*

**Rosalie:** I also talked with Dr. Lopez about what to do for mouth injuries. I was a little frightened a few weeks ago when Alisha fell and hurt her mouth. I wasn't sure what to do about it. Dr. Lopez said that we should call the dentist right away if our children injure their teeth or mouth. Did you know that if a child's tooth is knocked out you should put it in milk and bring it with you to the dentist?

**Ginny:** I didn't know that. What else did she tell you about mouth injuries?

**Rosalie:** Dr. Lopez said it's important to keep the mouth clean. You can use water to rinse the mouth so you can check on the injury. Dr. Lopez also said if Alisha seemed to be in pain, I could give her an aspirin substitute. Do you remember why you shouldn't give children aspirin?

**Ginny:** I DO remember. It might cause a condition called Reye's Syndrome.

**Rosalie:** You're right and Dr. Lopez mentioned that, but she gave me another reason. Want to know what it is?

**Felicia:** Yes!

**Rosalie:** Aspirin can keep blood from clotting. You want the mouth to stop bleeding, so no aspirin!

**Ginny:** I didn't think of that reason when we talked about not rubbing aspirin on a toothache.

**Rosalie:** The dentist said the soft tissue in the mouth heals quickly. Isn't that something?



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Felicia: It sure is! It is good to know what to do before an emergency happens. It sounds like Dr. Lopez gave you lots of information.

Rosalie: **Did you make an appointment to take the children back for a check-up in six months? I made an appointment for Alisha before we left the clinic. I also asked the dentist where I should go to have my teeth cleaned. She gave me the name of a dental clinic in the same building. I have an appointment to get my teeth cleaned and checked on Wednesday.**

Felicia: I made appointments for Carlos and Luis. How about you Ginny?

Ginny: **I made appointments, too. Rosalie, you told us that the library has books for children about going to the doctor. Do they have books for kids about going to the dentist? It would be fun to read about the dentist before we go.**

Rosalie: I'm sure they do. Let's go to the library. We can look for the books. And, the children can pick out books that they want to borrow.

**END OF SCENE.**

*Facilitator Guide: After Questions, p. 15*

*Make 1 Copy per Participant of p. 18, and do Follow-Up Activity on p. 15.*



### **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- *Caregivers can help with dental emergencies.*
- *Use aspirin substitutes.*



*Facilitator Guide: Before Questions, p. 16*

### ACT III, Scene III: How can I help take care of my children's teeth?

Characters in this scene: Ginny, Rosalie, Felicia

*Two weeks later. Rosalie's house. Rosalie seated, writing in her health log. Ginny and Felicia enter.*

**Ginny:** **Hi Rosalie! We're taking the books back to the library. Do you and Alisha want to join us?**

Rosalie: I'd love to! But, can we wait for a few minutes? I was just writing a page in Alisha's health log. I'm adding information about her dental health, too.

**Felicia:** **What are you writing?**

Rosalie: I wrote about her cavities, getting her teeth cleaned, and having a fluoride treatment. I wish I could remember when she got her first teeth. How have you two been doing with taking care of the children's teeth? It's hard to get into a new routine, but we are working on it!

**Ginny:** **We're working on it, too. Donny is starting to remind me that he and Maggie need to brush their teeth before they go to bed. He really likes to brush his teeth. I let him buy a special toothbrush.**

Felicia: Oh, yes. My boys enjoyed buying their own toothbrushes, too. Carlos likes to remind me about brushing our teeth. He shakes his finger and says, "Brush your teeth twice a day."

**Ginny:** **We're supposed to have them brush their teeth after they have sweet snacks, too. I'm trying to cut down on the sweets. I've been buying more fruits and vegetables.**

Rosalie: I've been buying plain yogurt. Luckily, Alisha likes it, and it's a healthy snack, too.



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**Felicia:** I'm lucky. I've never eaten too many sweets and I'm glad. Now that I'm pregnant, it's even more important to eat healthy foods. The boys usually eat fruits and vegetables for their snacks.

Rosalie: Are you ready to run to the library?

Ginny, *laughing*: Do we have to run? You're going to run Felicia and me ragged!

Rosalie, *smiling at her friends*: Honey, we've got to run. How else can we keep up with all we need to know about raising healthy kids today? Let's go!

END OF PLAY.

*Facilitator Guide: After Questions and Follow-up Activity, p. 16.*

*Make 1 Copy per Participant of pp. 22, 25, and 27 and have fun!*



### KEY CONCEPTS:

- *Keep your health logs up to date.*
- *Set family routines for dental care.*
- *Preventive dental care is important.*