

# Healthy families Healthy smiles

Issue No 19 June 2021

**Welcome** to issue No. 19 of the Healthy Families Healthy Smiles newsletter! It is time for our first newsletter of the year, and the team have put together an update of the program highlights and happenings over the last 5 months.

## DHSV launches oral health translations in 12 languages to support diverse communities

We are excited to share our new 'Caring for Gums and Teeth 0-6 years' brochure. A simple, visual resource which outlines the steps for taking care of baby teeth. This fact sheet was the outcome of a consultation process with over 50 families and health and early childhood professionals. It reflects the diverse faces of families living in Victoria and it provides information with images and simple messages. Consultation ensured the fact sheet is respectful of diverse cultural backgrounds and now we are happy to be able

to also provide families with the fact sheet in 12 community languages – Arabic, Burmese, Cambodian, Chin (Hakha), Dari, Dinka, Karen, Simplified Chinese (Mandarin), Persian, Punjabi and Vietnamese. To access the resources, visit [Translated oral health brochures | dHSV.org.au](https://dHSV.org.au).



Arabic, Burmese, Cambodian, Chin (Hakha), Dari, Dinka, Karen, Simplified Chinese (Mandarin), Nuer, Persian, Punjabi, Vietnamese.

### In this issue...

Translated Oral Health Resources.....	1
Social Media Kit.....	2
Dental Care: COVID-19 Update.....	3
Brands Off Our Kids.....	4
New Website Launch.....	4
Spotlight On.....	5
Team update.....	6

## Sharing Bite Size Messages with Families

Dental Health Services Victoria has created a user-friendly [social media kit](https://www.dhsv.org.au/social-media-kit) (or type in this URL: [tinyurl.com/DHSV-smk](https://tinyurl.com/DHSV-smk)) full of great tips, activities and suggested messages to share with families with children under 5 years.

It's essential that we support children's health by helping families understand the importance of dental health and share information that supports children and families to make healthy choices for teeth. Any support you can give would be greatly appreciated.

Dental Health Week is the perfect time to talk about teeth! – or share these posts all year round:

### National Families Week: May 15-21

<https://nfw.org.au/>

Over a hundred thousand people get involved in hundreds of community events during the Week in Australia's biggest celebration of families in all their diversity. Please join us in celebrating the vital role that families play through National Families Week!

### Dental Health Week: August 2-8

<https://www.ada.org.au/>

Its aim is to educate Australians about the importance of maintaining good oral health in every aspect of their lives.

### Children's Book Council of Australia Book Week:

August 21-27

<https://www.cbca.org.au/cbca-book-week>

Each year, schools and public libraries across Australia spend a week celebrating books, and Australian authors and illustrators. This is a great opportunity to use DHSV's list of dental themed book ideas [DHWSStorytimeKit - storybook.indd \(dhsv.org.au\)](https://www.dhsv.org.au/dhw-storytime-kit-storybook).

## 2021 HFHS Forum

Thanks to everyone for bringing their expertise and experience around the table and sharing your views regarding *Supporting the oral health of children under 3 years and pregnant women* at our recent online stakeholder forum.

Over 30 people attended the forum providing rich feedback which is integral in helping to shape our plans and activities in the next phase. This will help ensure the program meets the needs of children under 5 years and pregnant women, particularly focusing on population groups who are at higher risk of developing poor oral health including, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and refugees and asylum seekers.

As we work to identify program initiatives and plan our strategies, we are looking for opportunities to engage meaningfully with our loyal supporters as well as new champions and stakeholders. Please let us know if you would like to be involved by completing 3 questions in our [Stakeholder Survey](#).



**Talking about teeth Social Media Kit For Facebook**

Choose a post, cut and paste the text, download a high-quality image from DHSV's social media kit webpage and share in your social media channels. In some posts we have linked to a YouTube video, so we haven't provided an image, because when you share the link on Facebook, it will automatically bring up a preview image. You can access all the images here [www.dhsv.org.au/social-media-kit](https://www.dhsv.org.au/social-media-kit)

**Talking with kids about teeth**  
To help kids learn about teeth and why it's important to brush, here's some fun activities.

**BIG TOOTHY SMILE**  
Have fun with your little ones by making a BIG TOOTHY SMILE! Cut a paper plate in half and invite children to colour the mouth and draw teeth. Use this time together to help children learn more about their teeth.  
• Our teeth do important jobs, so we need to take care of them and keep them healthy so that they don't get sick.  
• Brushing our teeth is the best way to keep our teeth strong, clean and healthy.  
Share your Big Toothy Smile with us – and help put a smile on our face!

**SAY CHEESE!**  
Little ones love looking at themselves. Next time you take a photo, or are looking in the mirror, talk about teeth – healthy, happy teeth. CHOMP the foods we love, give us a gorgeous SMILE and help us ROAR! Like a lion! Turn this ordinary moment into a game to help your child learn about their teeth.  
It's important to eat lots of healthy foods, keep sweet foods for special occasions and brush twice a day to keep a super smile.

**TOOTH-TASTIC ACTIVITY**  
Here's a quick and easy craft activity – draw around your child's head on a piece of paper. Get them to add parts of the face – ears, nose, eyes, hair, mouth and teeth by painting, drawing or sticking on objects. Take the opportunity to talk about their teeth. Our teeth have important jobs – they help us smile, talk, chew and eat. It's important to brush our teeth to keep them strong, clean, healthy and happy. Share your finished faces with us, we'd love to see your mini-masterpieces!

**WHY DO I HAVE TO BRUSH MY TEETH?**  
Young children love to find out about how the world works. To help your little one understand why it's important we brush our teeth, explain tooth decay in a very simple way:  
"Inside everyone's mouth there are tiny little sugar bugs. They are so tiny you can't even see them! These sugar bugs love to eat the little bits of food that get stuck in your teeth. And they especially love sweet, sugary foods and drinks. When you brush your teeth, you brush away the away the sugar bugs and keep your teeth healthy. If you don't brush your teeth the sugar bugs can make holes in them – ouch!"

## Dental Care: COVID-19 Update

For many parents, the pandemic made it harder to access dental care. A recent article published by the University of Melbourne and the eViDent Foundation (Dec 2020), showed there was a significant decrease in treatment provided through the Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS – is available for children aged 2-17 years who are part of a family receiving Family Tax Benefit A and covers basic dental costs).

Understandably, families may have questions related to treatment, appointments, and other topics related to the oral health care of their children.

As trusted professionals who are in regular contact with families, it is important we play a role in helping to reassure families of the importance of seeing the dentist for a check-up and that it is safe to visit the dentist.

Dental practices have strict infection control procedures in place based on the latest guidance, as well as other measures to protect patients and staff. Before an appointment, patients may be asked a few questions to see if they have any symptoms of COVID-19, have a temperature check be asked to wash their hands.

### ***Where can I go to see a dentist?***

- You have 2 options, a public dentist or private dentist.

### **Public dental service**

To find your nearest public dental clinic visit the Dental Health Services Victoria website [www.dhsv.org.au](http://www.dhsv.org.au) >> Find your nearest dental clinic and enter your postcode (or phone 03 9341 1000)



### **Private dentist**

To find a private dentist visit the Yellow Pages website or the Australian Dental Association's website.

### ***What will it cost?***

- Dental care for children aged 0-12 years is free at a public dental clinic— if you have a healthcare or pensioner concession card (otherwise it's low cost).
- For children aged 2-17 years (who are part of a family getting Family Tax Benefit A) CDBS covers some or all of the cost of a range of basic dental services. (Not all dentists provide services under CDBS; it's best to check with your dentist)
- The cost of visiting a private dentist will vary so check when you make an appointment.

### ***How long will we have to wait for an appointment?***

In the public system, children up to age 12 do not go on a waiting list – they will be given the first available appointment.

## Brands Off Our Kids

### Tackling junk food advertising for kids

In the oral health sector, it is known that consumption of unhealthy foods and drinks on a regular basis is a significant risk factor for tooth decay. Just as it is important to provide children with education about healthy eating from a young age to prevent poor oral health, limiting their exposure to messaging that promotes unhealthy foods is equally important.

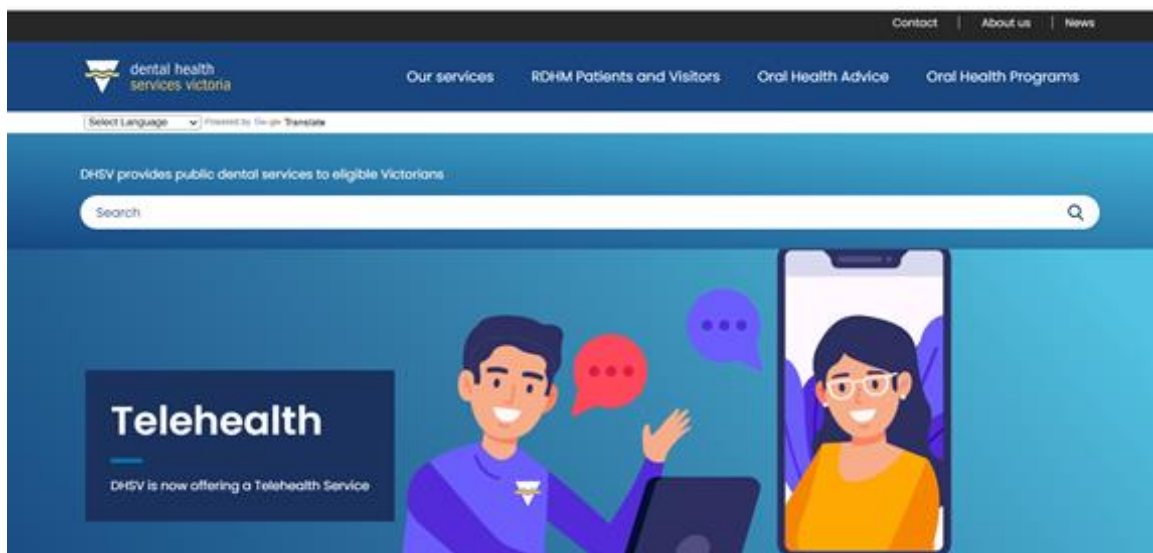
On 4 March, World Obesity Day, the Obesity Policy Coalition, in partnership with VicHealth, Cancer Council Victoria, Diabetes Victoria, and the Global Obesity Centre at Deakin University, released a new report titled 'Brands Off Our Kids' to tackle unhealthy food marketing targeted towards children. The report outlines the many "worrying" ways that the processed food and advertising industries market unhealthy foods to children and calls for government action to implement formal standards that protect children from being exposed to such marketing.

There are currently no formal standards in place to regulate marketing towards children and as a result, processed food and advertising industries can advertise their products to children through several marketing channels, with only limited restrictions and guidelines established by the industry itself. To combat this, the report puts forward and outlines four actions to work towards "a childhood free from unhealthy food marketing" and aims to hold the government accountable for leading the change.

To read the report and more visit <https://www.opc.org.au/brands-off-our-kids>

### New Website Launch

DHSV launched their new-look website in early March. Across the top of the page you will find the four main information tabs. For oral health advice and information click on the third tab labelled 'Oral Health Advice' and select 'For Professionals'. Here you will find information for several different professionals, simply click on the one that's relevant to you. Head over to [www.dhsv.org.au](http://www.dhsv.org.au) to check it out!





# Spotlight on

## Top 10 Child Health Problems link to Oral Health

The Royal Children's Hospital released their latest Child Oral Health Poll titled 'Top 10 child health problems: What Australian parents think' on 18 March 2021. The poll collected data from 1,980 parents across Australia through interviews, yielding data on a total of 3,439 children aged between 1-18 months.



From the information collected, the top three health problems that Australian parents reported to be concerned about, have a relationship to oral health. These are:

**1. Excessive screen time:** When watching TV children are subjected to advertising promoting unhealthy discretionary food.

**2. Unhealthy diet:** A diet high in added sugars is a key factor in early childhood caries.

**3. Overweight and obesity:** Dental caries, overweight and obesity share common contributing factors, including biological, genetic, socioeconomic, cultural, dietary, environmental, and lifestyle factors.

For more information about the poll results visit: <https://www.rchpoll.org.au/polls/top-10-child-health-problems-what-australian-parents-think/>

## Ending Early Childhood Caries: WHO Implementation Manual

Want to know more about early childhood caries and how can we prevent it?

The World Health Organisations Ending Childhood Dental Caries report and implementation manual intends to inform and support policy-makers on actions and rationales for ECC interventions. The manual is based on updated evidence from systematic reviews and WHO recommendations, with a focus on nutrition, including breast feeding and community health worker programs.

For more information visit: [Ending childhood dental caries: WHO implementation manual](#)



## **Farewell and good luck Natalia**

Last month, Natalia Okelo, Health Promotion Lead – Healthy Families, Healthy Smiles finished up at DHSV. Natalia’s contribution to HFHS over three years included work on HFHS second phase evaluation report and setting the stage for the third phase of HFHS. Her wisdom and experience will be missed. We wish her all the best going forward.

## get in touch

For more information about any of the Healthy Families, Healthy Smiles activities please contact :

**Gillian Lang**

Health Promotion Officer  
Healthy Families, Healthy Smiles  
P: 03 9341 1162  
E: [gillian.lang@dhsv.org.au](mailto:gillian.lang@dhsv.org.au)

**Robyn Alexander**

Health Promotion Officer  
Healthy Families, Healthy Smiles  
P: 03 9341 1722  
E: [robyn.alexander@dhsv.org.au](mailto:robyn.alexander@dhsv.org.au)