

# Healthy families Healthy smiles

Issue No 16 July 2019

## Supported Playgroups: more conversations around dental health

It's been a big year for the team — already! This year we launched **Brush Book Bed**, a program trialling a new approach to promote toothbrushing among young families.

We asked Supported Playgroups Facilitators to talk to families about brushing and show parents how to brush, with the help of Little Croc (crocodile dental puppet). Facilitators could offer families some practical support to help make toothbrushing fun, with a Toothbrushing chart and reminder sticker for the bathroom mirror.

The aim is to increase families' awareness and confidence with toothbrushing. We know getting children to brush can be challenging - just over one third (39%) preschoolers and more than half (58%) of infants and toddlers don't have their teeth brushed twice a day (RCH National Child Health Poll, March 2018).

Over the past six months, 86 Supported Playgroup Facilitators took part in **Brush Book Bed** from across 19 local government areas, with a reach of 118 Supported Playgroups and 1,632 families.

It is early in the evaluation period, but we are delighted with the positive feedback from Facilitators and families. One of the biggest winners was Little Croc our dental puppet!

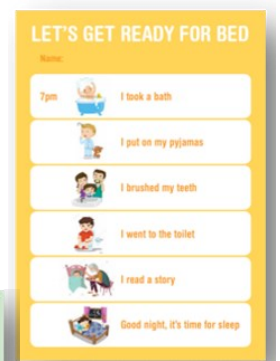
Thanks again to the wonderful Supported Playgroups and families who participated in the **Brush Book Bed** trial.

Thanks to funding from Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) the **Brush Book Bed** pilot project will be extended to professional Supported Playgroup Facilitators able to deliver a toothbrushing demonstration and take part in pre/post evaluation, in selected regions.



*"All kids loved the puppet."*

*"Parents were amazed to know how crucial it is to brush their child's teeth before bed."*



*Brush, Book Bed resources*



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# What's been happening with Baby teeth need cleaning too!

58% of infants and toddlers don't have their teeth brushed twice a day

RCH Child Oral Health Poll, March 2018

Since the launch of this initiative at the Municipal Association of Victoria Maternal and Child Health Forum in October 2018, 79 Local Government Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services have received toothbrushes and toothpaste and supporting information to share with 11,000 families enrolled in the Enhanced MCH Program, which is a more targeted service for families who may need some extra support.

- ◆ 1,190 large mouth models were distributed to all MCH nurses to support demonstrating how to brush teeth
- ◆ Over 21,000 standard and low fluoride toothpaste and 43,000 adult and child toothbrushes were delivered across the state to make up family toothpicks.
- ◆ Information for the family toothpicks included story time, video and apps flyers plus 'how to brush' teeth guide.



Now it is time to reflect on the design, planning and delivery of the baby teeth need cleaning too! initiative. areas for improvement. If you are a MCH nurse involved in the delivery of the initiative

We are keen to hear the views of MCH nurses involved in the initiative on what worked well and areas of improvement.

If you are a MCH nurse involved in the delivery of the initiative please share your thoughts with us at :

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5R297JL>

MCH nurses are also helping to collect information from families who received tooth packs and the printed resources. The link for parents' survey can be found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GLGBQFT>.

The information that MCH nurses and families provide is important to us and will allow us to improve our future programs.

DHSV acknowledges the State Government of Victoria for providing the funding for this initiative and would like to thank all the Enhanced and Universal MCH Nurses who are supporting families with toothbrushing through *Baby teeth need cleaning too!* initiative.

## Welcome to Shelley and Rana

Shelley Pham has recently joined the Healthy Family Healthy Smiles team as a Health Promotion Officer. She has 10 years' experience as a Dental Hygienist from Canada and has worked in the United States as a Dental Hygienist and Oral Health Educator for a not for profit organisation. Shelley brings a wealth of experience in oral health education for families with young children and pregnant women, screening, fluoride varnish application and sealant placement for school age children. Shelley is excited to join the team and to contribute to good oral health outcomes for the Victorian community. Shelley works across both the Healthy Family Healthy Smiles and Smiles 4 Miles teams. Welcome to the team Shelley!

Rana, a Master of Public Health student from University of Melbourne, is on a work placement with HFHS. She is supporting the evaluation activities of the Brush, Book, Bed initiative. Rana has 5 years' experience as a dentist and has been promoting oral health throughout her dental career. She volunteered with Hepatitis Victoria as a health promotion officer. Rana strongly believes in health promotion at a population level and is passionate about improving the oral health of all Victorians.



# Bigger Better Smiles goes to Swan Hill

## To support oral health promotion amongst the staff at MDAS Swan Hill

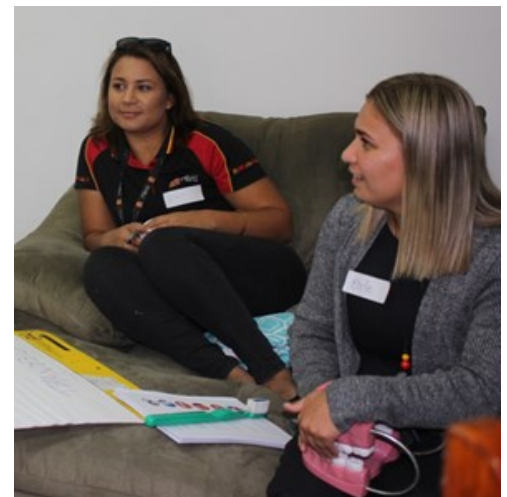
Healthy Families Healthy Smiles continues to work with Victorian Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Organizations. Bigger Better Smiles is an educational package designed to meet each organisational needs. MDAS Swan Hill will be involved in the Loddon Mallee region fluoride varnish pilot. Djallarna Hamilton an Aboriginal Health Worker from Mallee District Aboriginal Services Swan Hill, worked with the Healthy Families Healthy Smiles to plan for the delivery of Bigger Better Smiles training for MDAS staff in Swan Hill. The purpose of training was to strengthen the work of staff in promoting oral health and to support the implementation of the Loddon Mallee fluoride varnish pilot program for Aboriginal children.

The Bigger Better Smiles workshop held 13 March 2019 had nine participating staff members from MDAS Swan Hill, Mildura and Kerang. By the end of the workshop MDAS staff had come up with great ideas to promote better oral health in their community. Some of the ideas included:

- Revisit existing programs including Deadly Choices program, to explore opportunities for including oral health promotion
- Incorporate oral health messages in all activities
- Establish a working group to discuss ways of introducing oral health talks in different roles
- Partner with playgroups, kindergartens, mums and bubs groups and introduce oral health promotion in these settings
- Talk about oral health in the health check appointments and other appointments
- Advocate for inclusion of dental checks on the intake criteria for "In Home Support" program
- Take dental checks to the playgroups
- Explore referral process with Swan Hill Community Dental Service .



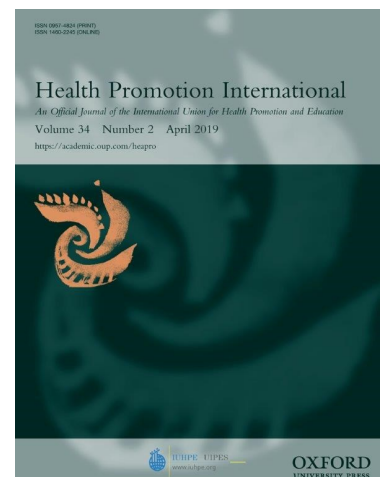
Dental Health Services Victoria would like to thank the management team of MDAS Swan Hill for the opportunity to work with their staff. A big thank you also goes to the workshop participants and to Djallarna Hamilton who helped bring Bigger Better Smiles to MDAS Swan Hill.



## Spotlight on

### DHSV Tooth packs research reaches an international audience through the journal Health Promotion International April 2019

Research funded by the Department of Health and Human Services was conducted in conjunction with Victorian Local Government Maternal and Child Health services in 2012-2013. The purpose was to demonstrate whether the provision of oral hygiene products through the MCH service improved children's toothbrushing and oral hygiene practices. The findings showed significant increases in the likelihood of children visiting dentists and parents assisting their children to brush their teeth at least twice per/day. The research confirmed that MCH services provided the ideal setting for improving children's oral health.



<https://academic.oup.com/heapro/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/heapro/daz025/5475794?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

# Dental Health Week: Teeth at the Zoo!

During Dental Health Week (5 -11 August) Dental Health Services Victoria and Zoos Victoria will team up to provide fun activities for children under five at Werribee Open Range Zoo.

This is an extension of an ongoing – and unique - partnership between DHSV and Zoos Victoria. Werribee Open Range Zoo’s hippos are a key feature of the partnership and provide a terrific opportunity to start conversations with young children about teeth and how it’s important to take care of them. Just like humans, hippos require their teeth to be cleaned every day, too.

During Dental Health Week, Werribee Open Range Zoo’s **Toddler Weekdays** include daily activities that highlight the importance of teeth and dental health, inspired by a collection of songs, storybook ideas and craft activities, aimed to actively engage young children in fun, play-based learning around teeth and how to keep them healthy. Dental staff will also be at each Toddler Weekday session, offering free dental health checks (for toddlers) between 10.30am and 12.30pm.

This partnership complements other DHSV prevention programs, such as Smiles 4 Miles and Healthy Families Healthy Smiles by engaging children and families in dental health awareness through new and fun opportunities.



# The online Midwifery Initiated Oral Health Education Program moves to a new home

**The Midwifery Initiated Oral Health Education Program is now available to all midwives across Australia via the Australian College of Midwives (ACM) eLearning Portal. Now even more midwives can benefit from this great online learning course.**

Since 2012 Healthy Families, Healthy Smiles has sponsored over 260 Victorian midwives working in antenatal care to undertake the 16 CPD point Midwifery Initiated Oral Health (MIOH) education program offered through Western Sydney University. MIOH has now transferred to the Australian College of Midwives

eLearning Portal and is available for all midwives across Australia. As part of the move to the ACM website MIOH has been revamped, it is more interactive, and easier to navigate.

Click here to read more about the ACM's MIOH e-learning course <https://www.midwives.org.au/shop/midwifery-initiated-oral-health>.

The good news is that through State Government funding DHSV will continue to sponsor MIOH course fees for Victorian midwives who:

- ◆ work in the antenatal clinic and do the first booking visit under midwifery care, midwifery case load model or GP shared care

- ◆ are Women's Health unit managers and or assistant managers
- ◆ are clinical educators in Victorian hospital settings
- ◆ are midwifery lecturers at universities in Victoria
- ◆ are working in the Koori Maternity Service
- ◆ are childbirth and early parenting educators.

Midwives who wish to do the course and meet the criteria for sponsorship can apply to Dental Health Services Victoria by clicking this link

<https://www.dhsv.org.au/oral-health-programs/hfhs/eoi>



**Midwifery Initiated Oral Health Program**

Now available as an e-Learning course

**\$176.00**

Sponsorship available for Victorian Midwives through Dental Health Services Victoria. For eligibility requirements visit [www.midwives.org.au](http://www.midwives.org.au).

Recognised by ACM for **16 CPD hours**

Developed by the Centre for Oral Health Outcomes & Research Translation in collaboration with:

acm Midwives, WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY, Ingham Institute



## get in touch

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