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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF DENTAL OFFICER OF CANADA
BUREAU DU DENTISTE EN CHEF DU CANADA



Dr. James Taylor, Chief Dental Officer of Canada at the Public Health Agency of Canada
Dr James Taylor, Dentiste en chef du Canada à l'Agence de la santé publique du Canada

Launch of the “Lift the Lip” Video

Rates of early childhood tooth decay among Indigenous children continue to be about three times greater than the rates for non-Indigenous children. To help build awareness of early childhood tooth decay, a partnership has been established between the Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program “Healthy Start for Mom and Me” (Winnipeg) (funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada), the Office of the Chief Dental Officer (Ottawa) and the Healthy Smile Happy Child organization (Winnipeg). These organizations have created a culturally appropriate video incorporating key oral health messages for vulnerable children aged 0-6 years and their families. The video has been produced in both official languages and also in Cree, Ojibwe and Inuktitut. The video highlights a practice called “Lift the Lip” whereby parents/caregivers lift the lip of their young children to assess their mouth for early signs of tooth decay. This practice is recognized worldwide as an effective means to increase early intervention to prevent early childhood tooth decay and promotes a family focus on oral health and preventive dental care.

The video “Lift the Lip” was officially launched in English on May 25th and in French on June 1st, through a partnership with the Nanaandawewigamig First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba - Partners for Engagement and Knowledge Exchange, the Saint Elizabeth First Nations, Inuit and Métis Program, as a free webinar for Indigenous communities from across the country and those interested to know more about the subject.

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The presenters were from the “Healthy Smile Happy Child” project including Dr. Robert Schroth from the University of Manitoba, the Office of the Chief Dental Officer’s representative Ms. Lisette Dufour, and the “Healthy Start for Mom & Me” Executive Director, Ms. Davorka Monti.

This webinar highlighted the following key messages:

- the importance of early childhood oral health
- how to look for early signs of caries
- toothpaste recommendations for children
- how to connect children with oral health professionals before their first birthday

Background on Healthy Smile Happy Child (HSHC):

HSHC is an intersectoral, collaborative partnership that takes an upstream community development approach to engage communities in Early Childhood Caries prevention strategies and promotion of early childhood oral health. HSHC has a well-established partnership that includes a multidisciplinary team of clinicians, Regional Health Authorities, decision-makers, communities, health providers, and professional groups.

Office of the Chief Dental Officer of Canada
Public Health Agency of Canada

Lancement de la video «Soulever la lèvre»

Le taux de la carie de la petite enfance chez les enfants autochtones continue d'être environ trois fois supérieur aux taux chez les enfants non autochtones. Pour aider à sensibiliser la population à la carie de la petite enfance, le Programme «Démarrage sain pour maman et moi » de Winnipeg (opérant sous la bannière du Programme canadien de nutrition prénatale), financé par l'Agence de la santé publique du Canada, le Bureau du dentiste en chef du Canada et l'organisation «Sourire sain, enfant heureux», ont créé une vidéo culturellement appropriée intégrant des messages clés sur la santé buccodentaire pour les enfants vulnérables de 0 à 6 ans et leurs familles. La vidéo fut produite dans les deux langues officielles et aussi en cri, ojibwe et inuktitut.

Cette vidéo met l'accent sur une pratique appelée «Soulever la lèvre» où les parents/soignants soulèvent la lèvre de leurs jeunes enfants afin de détecter des signes précurseurs de la carie dentaire. Cette pratique est reconnue mondialement comme un moyen efficace d'augmenter l'intervention précoce pour prévenir la carie de la petite enfance. Cette pratique favorise l'accent mis par la famille sur la santé buccodentaire et les soins dentaires.

La vidéo "Soulever la lèvre" a été officiellement lancée en anglais le 25 mai et en français le 1er juin, grâce à un partenariat entre le Secrétariat social de la santé des Premières nations de Nanaandawewigamig du Manitoba – le programme de «Partenaire pour l'engagement et l'échange des connaissances» des IRSC ainsi que le programme de Saint Elizabeth – section Premières nations, inuit et métis. Ces organisations ont offert gratuitement un webinaire mis à la disposition des communautés autochtones de tout le pays et pour ceux qui souhaitent en savoir plus sur le sujet.

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Parmi les présentateurs, nous retrouvons des représentants du projet « Sourire sain, enfant heureux », dont le Dr Robert Schroth de l'Université du Manitoba, la représentante du bureau du dentiste en chef du Canada Mme Lisette Dufour, et la directrice générale du programme «Démarrage sain pour maman et moi", Mme Davorka Monti.

Ce webinaire met l'accent sur les messages clé suivants:

- L'importance de la santé buccodentaire durant la petite enfance
- Comment trouver les signes précurseurs de la carie de la petite enfance
- Recommandations pour les dentifrices pour les enfants
- Comment assurer une première visite chez un professionnel de la santé buccodentaire avant le premier anniversaire des enfants

Contexte sur l'organisation «Sourire sain, enfant heureux (SSEH)»

SSEH est un partenariat intersectoriel et collaboratif qui adopte une approche de développement communautaire en amont pour impliquer les communautés dans les stratégies de prévention de la carie de la petite enfance et la promotion de la santé buccodentaire de la petite enfance. SSEH a un partenariat bien établi qui comprend une équipe multidisciplinaire de cliniciens, les autorités régionales de la santé, les décideurs, les communautés, les fournisseurs de soins de santé et les groupes professionnels.

Bureau du Dentiste en chef du Canada
Agence de la santé publique du Canada

NEWS From Around the World

Dental Assisting in China

by Tammy Thomson, CDAA President

I have been teaching dental assistance for the Lester B Pearson School board in Montreal, Quebec since 2001. I have met a significant number of students from China during that time, including at least half a dozen who were dentists in their home country. This year is the first time we've had a student from China who worked as a dental assistant in her home country. Yingyan (Fiona) graciously agreed to answer my questions and share her experience with the CDAA.

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I have just been elected as President of the Canadian Dental Assistants' Association (CDAA) and one of our main goals is to create an international network of dental assistants so I was very excited by the opportunity to find out more about dental assisting in China and to share this information with CDAA. This is not the first contact CDAA has had with dental assisting in China; a delegation of dental assistant "ambassadors" comprised of CDAA members and members of the Dental Assistant Educators of Canada (DAEC) travelled to Beijing in October 2008 under the People to People Ambassador program.

Their mission was to exchange information on dental assisting. Michelle Rosko, then past president of CDAA wrote of the mission in the DAEC newsletter,

"One of the most economic and effective means of oral health education and oral disease prevention is the utilization of the dental assistant. Through discussion with educators of dental assistants (nurses) and our international counterparts in the field, we can offer a Western perspective of the invaluable contributions that dental assistants can make in the areas of infection control, 4/6 handed assisting and with dental procedures and provision of prevention practices for patients." (DAEC, Newsletter, March 1, 2008, Volume 5, Issue 1)

Michelle wrote of a lack of access to dental care with only one dentist per 55 000 people. It appears a lot was happening in dentistry in China during those years: a delegation of dental hygienists had visited China under the People to People program in 2001 (<http://www.rdhmag.com/articles/print/volume-23/issue-2/feature/a-delegation-to-china.html>) and the World Dental Congress was held there in 2006. <http://www.fdiworlddental.org/events/fdi-world-dental-congress/past-congresses>. I was very interested in hearing from Yingyan what dental assisting in China was like. Yingyan worked as a dental assistant in Guangzhou for over 10 years.



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She described the duties of a chairside assistant as:

“The chairside assistant works primarily with the dentist who uses four-handed dentistry techniques. She mixes dental materials, exchanges instruments, provides oral evacuation during dental procedure and maintain the treatment room and dental equipment. EX (disinfect the dental unit every patients, supplementary materials, scaling and polish, use the radiography, take impression, temporary crown).”

There is also the role of the “Circulating assistant” a helper who helps sterilize the instruments, change the cleaning solutions, perform biologic monitoring every week, store sterilized items and other tasks. Yingyan informed me there are no Dental Assistant courses taught in any type of education institutions and that dental assistants are trained in dental offices by dentists and there is no standard training system for the DAs but they require a nurse certificate by the government health department in order to work. It sounds as though dental services are available in hospitals where dental specialties may be practiced and general dental services and orthodontic treatment are available in private practice clinics. Yingyan shared some photos and training videos with me and it appears dental equipment and some practices are very similar to Western dentistry.



I could tell right away that Yingyan knew her way around a dental office; she was already familiar with many of the instruments and equipment we use. She has learned a lot about the way we do things here and is looking forward to starting her stage at the end of this month; hopefully we will have an opportunity to do a follow-up interview and find out more about how dental assisting in Canada compares to dental assisting in China.

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