



# Spotlight on Oral Health

Dental Health Promotion Working Group of  
Saskatchewan Newsletter

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## April is National Oral Health Month

### Oral Health...What is it?

The Canadian Dental Association defines oral health as “a state of the oral and related tissues and structures that contribute positively to physical, mental and social well-being and to the enjoyment of life’s possibilities, by allowing the individual to speak, eat and socialize unhindered by pain, discomfort or embarrassment.”

Simply stated, oral health is an essential part of overall health and well being. The mouth is used for important everyday tasks such as speaking, eating and smiling. Anyone with a terrible toothache can attest to how difficult it is to think of anything else.

Oral health means having teeth free of tooth decay, pain or infection. It means having healthy gums that are pink and firm, and free of plaque or hard deposits like calculus.

### What can you do for good oral health?



#### A Five Point Oral Health Plan for You and Your Family



- Brush your teeth everyday twice a day for at least 2 minutes
- Floss your teeth everyday and help your kids to floss too
- Eat a well-balanced diet. Avoid sweets between meals
- Know your gums! Check your gums regularly for signs of gum disease
- Don't wait till it hurts. See your dentist for regular check-ups & cleanings

For more go to: [http://www.cda-adc.ca/en/oral\\_health/oral\\_health\\_life.asp](http://www.cda-adc.ca/en/oral_health/oral_health_life.asp)

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CHEERS FOR  
FLUORIDE  
MOUTH RINSE  
VOLUNTEERS!

A big THANK YOU  
to the **186** wonderful  
volunteers  
around the province  
who generously donate  
their time to monitor  
the ongoing school  
based Weekly  
Fluoride Mouth  
Rinse Program.



### Provincial Fluoride Mouth rinse Program– Swishing Away Decay

Fluoride is a mineral found naturally throughout the world. Because it makes the outer layer of teeth stronger, it is used to prevent cavities.

The school based Fluoride Mouth rinse program is offered in communities with less than optimal levels of fluoride in the local drinking water. The program is mainly school based with a few health facilities taking part. It is coordinated by Dental Health Educators from each Health Region throughout the province and has been offered to schools in Saskatchewan for over 30 years. In the 2009-10 school year, 90% of eligible students in grades 1-8 participated.

#### Fast facts!

- over 230 schools in the province take part in the fluoride rinse program
- 21,836 students in the province take part & benefit from the rinse program

[http://www.cda-adc.ca/en/oral\\_health/cfyt/dental\\_care\\_children/fluoride.asp](http://www.cda-adc.ca/en/oral_health/cfyt/dental_care_children/fluoride.asp)

### School and Community Dental Resource Corner

Try these web links for great dental resources and lesson plan ideas!!

<http://www.dentalhealthstartsnow.com>

<http://www.cavityfreeatthree.org/>

<http://www.smilesforlife2.org/powerpoints.html>

<http://teachhealthk-12.uthscsa.edu/curriculum/oralhealth/oralhealth.asp>



Check out page 4 for details on how your family can enter the  
Oral Health Month Contest!!



## Breastfeeding and Oral Health



Did you know that breastfeeding helps to set the stage for and contributes to good oral health. Breastfeeding helps to develop the facial muscles and promotes healthy development of a baby's mouth and jaw. The muscles that a baby uses when breastfeeding help to widen the arch or shape of the mouth. A wider arch can mean more evenly spaced teeth later on and less chance of having crowding or the need for braces.

Reference: Palmer B. 1998 *The Influence of Breastfeeding on the Development of the Oral Cavity: A Commentary*

### Did you know that Oral Care starts right at birth?

- get into a routine of wiping baby's gums with a clean damp cloth everyday
- cavity causing germs can be unknowingly passed on to baby from parents/caregivers...keep your own mouth clean to avoid passing these germs on to baby
- The Canadian Dental Association encourages the first dental visit by 1 year of age

A clean mouth for baby now means less bacteria in the mouth when those new baby teeth grow in.  
**Cavities are Contagious!!**

For more in-depth information go to:

[http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/dental/birth\\_oral\\_health.htm](http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/dental/birth_oral_health.htm)

## Tobacco, Youth and Oral Health

Dental Health Educators/Coordinators around the province are looking forward to the completion of the 2008-2009 Provincial Dental Screening Report. As part of the dental screening, grade 7 students in some health regions were asked about tobacco use. The results from this tobacco questionnaire will help guide the work of Dental Health Educators/Coordinators to enhance Tobacco Use Prevention strategies among Saskatchewan youth as part of the Comprehensive School Community Health Approach. For resources or information go to:

<http://www.tobaccotoolkit.ca>



# April is National Oral Health Month!



## Dental Health Promotion Working Group of Saskatchewan

present

## Annual Oral Health Month Contest

Mail, email or fax your entry to:

**Barb Ing– Dental Health Coordinator**

Spotlight on Oral Health Newsletter

1080 Winnipeg Street

Regina, Saskatchewan

Fax 306-766-6945

[Barb.Ing@rqhealth.ca](mailto:Barb.Ing@rqhealth.ca)

**Contest Deadline: May 14th, 2010**

- 1) How many students take part in the fluoride rinse program?
- 2) At what age does the CDA recommend the first dental visit?

(find answers in this issue)



1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Health Region: \_\_\_\_\_

*The first entry drawn with the correct answers will receive a dental prize*

