

Healthy families Healthy smiles

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Mrs Marsh continues to support the oral health of Victorian families

Thanks to Colgate and their 'Mrs Marsh Oral Health Education Grant', Healthy Families, Healthy Smiles continue to provide family tooth-packs to Maternal Child Health (MCH) services across four local government areas considered at high risk of tooth decay. Each family tooth-pack contains child and adult toothbrushes and toothpaste, and an oral health factsheet. These resources are designed to be given out to families at key ages and stages (KAS) visits, alongside a 'Lift the Lip' mouth check. A huge thank you to MCH nurses in Brimbank, Orbost, Robinvale, Dandenong, Gippsland Lakes and Swan Hill who have partnered with us to deliver this program.

DHSV research conducted in 2012-13 demonstrated that the provision of family tooth-packs by MCH nurses results in positive behavioural changes in families. This includes improved toothbrushing habits, increased use of toothpaste, attendance at dental visits for check-ups, and the number of parents who had been shown how to brush their child's teeth.

Our most recent data shows that when given a Mrs Marsh tooth-pack, 84% of children also received a 'Lift the Lip' mouth check by the MCH nurse. Oral disease was detected in just over 9% of these checks, prompting a referral. This highlights the continued effectiveness of family tooth-packs in supporting and complementing oral health screening and referrals in MCH practice.

Since the start of 2021, Colgate has helped us to supply MCH services with:

13400 oral hygiene products for families



2100 oral health fact sheets for families



"Our families are always happy to receive oral hygiene supplies at the KAS visits. Over the last three years our rural community has been under extreme stress from drought, fires and COVID all impacting on the provision of health services. Knowing that their children have access to mouth checks at MCH visits is reassuring to parents."

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dental health
services victoria
oral health for better health



Healthy families
Healthy smiles

New translated videos help young families care for children's teeth

To celebrate Dental Health Week (1-7 August), Dental Health Services Victoria (DHSV) launched a series of translated videos that provide practical toothbrushing tips and advice for parents with young children aged 0-6 years.

Our Toothbrushing with your baby (0-18 months) and Toothbrushing with your toddler or pre-schooler (18 months - 6 years) videos have been translated into 16 community languages and are a helpful resource for professionals to use when sharing information about oral health with culturally diverse families.

The videos are now available in Arabic, Burmese, Chinese simplified, Dari, Dinka, English, Farsi, Hazaragi, Karen, Khmer, Punjabi, Somali, Swahili, Tamil, Tigrinya, Urdu and Vietnamese.

Click on the links below to access these videos and their translations on YouTube:

- [Toothbrushing with your baby \(0 – 18 months old\)](#)
- [Toothbrushing with your toddler or pre-schooler \(18 months – 6 years\)](#)



Keeping Teeth Healthy - factsheets and social media tools

The new [Keeping Teeth Healthy 0-5 years](#) factsheet offers information about how to eat well, drink well and clean well during 0-3 years and 3-5 years – a key time for development. The factsheet can be shared with families with young children to instill good oral health habits for life.

There is also a [social media kit](#) containing colourful images and key messages that can be shared via your social media, newsletters and parent portals.



What is fluoride varnish and who can apply it?

Applying fluoride varnish is a simple procedure. It is a high concentration of fluoride “painted” onto the teeth every six months. It helps reduce tooth decay in both baby and adult teeth. Fluoride varnish can be tinted a golden colour when applied, but it will not stain teeth.

Fluoride varnish is a valuable tool because it can:

- Make teeth more resistant to acid attacks that occur in the mouth after eating and drinking
- Make the bacteria in our plaque less damaging to teeth
- Help to repair the early stages of tooth decay by healing important minerals to the teeth.



Fluoride varnished being applied to a tooth

Who can apply fluoride varnish?

Dentists, dental therapists, dental hygienists, oral health therapists and trained dental assistants (under the prescription of a dental practitioner) can apply fluoride varnish.

In 2022, the Drugs and Poisons Regulations were amended allowing registered Aboriginal health practitioners with appropriate training to apply fluoride varnish on children aged 3-17 who are clients of an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation in Victoria. The first group of Aboriginal health practitioners will receive training in October to gain this valuable skill. Healthy Families, Healthy Smiles are proud to be supporting this exciting initiative through the delivery of a workshop that provides knowledge and skills in oral health promotion.

Caring for gums and teeth factsheet – new translations

DHSV's [Caring for gums and teeth \(0-6 years\)](#) flyer is now available in 5 new languages: Somali, Swahili, Tamil, Tigrinya and Urdu. This joins our existing suit of 13 languages: It is available in: Arabic, Burmese, Chin (Hakha), Chinese simplified, Dari, Dinka, Farsi, Karen, Khmer, Nuer, Persian, Punjabi and Vietnamese.

This and other translated oral health resources are available on the DHSV website:

[Translated oral health information](#)



Get in touch

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

Lauren Zappa

Health Promotion Lead

E: lauren.zappa@dhsv.org.au

Olivia Bottomley

Health Promotion Officer

E: olivia.bottomley@dhsv.org.au

Shelley Pham

Health Promotion Officer

E: shelley.pham@dhsv.org.au