

healthy families healthy smiles

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The secret to getting children to eat and enjoy vegetables

We know that fruit and vegetables are really important for children, giving them the energy, vitamins and minerals they need to stay healthy.

Of course, what children eat and drink also affects their dental health, so we're keen to promote vegetables too. Vegetables make great snacks and eating them instead of processed, sugary foods is a great way to prevent tooth decay and improve overall health. **But getting children to eat their veggies can be challenging!**

According to new research, the secret to get children to eat and enjoy their vegetables, is to shift the messaging away from health outcomes. The Vegetable Intake Strategic Alliance (VISA) group partners reviewed a large body of evidence which informed the position statement, *Working Together to Increase Children's Liking of Vegetables*. They found that talking to children about the health benefits of vegetables has a negative effect on how much children like them.

Children are driven by the appearance, taste, flavour and texture, and not the healthiness, of food.



So to help children to eat and enjoy vegetables, VISA proposes these three evidence-based elements as best practice:

- Shifting focus to liking and enjoyment of vegetables (the joy)
- Creating vegetable exposure opportunities for children (more places to eat veggies)
- Working together (all parts of society working together)

CSIRO, Flinders University and Nutrition Australia have developed practical tools and resources, to support early childhood settings, including best practice guidelines.



Read more on the **VegKIT website**
www.vegkit.com.au/long-day-care/

World Oral Health Day

Monday 20 March

The health of children's teeth and mouths is as important as any other part of their bodies. Sometimes we don't make the connection that when you take good care of your teeth and mouth, you're taking good care of the rest of your body too.

Share our resources and start a conversation about taking care of our teeth



Visit the **DHSV website**

<https://www.dhsv.org.au/oral-health-advice/Professionals/oral-health-resources>



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Oral Health Messages for the Australian Public: Update

As part of our work together to protect and improve oral health in our communities, over the last decade, we've promoted key oral health messages about diet, tooth cleaning, and age of first oral health check.

These are drawn from a set of 11 oral health messages, ***Oral Health Messages for the Australian Public***, that were first developed in 2009 by dental, oral and general health experts, to protect teeth, gums and the mouth.

The evidence base underpinning oral health promotion in Australia has grown in the 13 years since the statement, and a review and update is needed.



The Melbourne Dental School has begun work on this project by leading a collaborative expert group to update the messages. The Delphi process is currently underway with results expected in early 2023.



Read the current [*Oral Health Messages for the Australian Public*](#)

Online Education Program for Midwives in Oral Health

Poor oral health during pregnancy can impact both the mother's health and the child.

Midwives may play an important role in oral health promotion.

DHSV has sponsored over 400 midwives to take up the **Midwifery Initiated Oral Health (MIOH)** course, developed by Western Sydney University and partners.

We are **now taking sponsorship applications for the next intake in April.**

The course focuses on education about dental health plus oral health screening, with referral for women identified with oral health problems.

To view the eligibility criteria and submit an expression of interest, click [here](#).



Face-to-face workshops are back

It's been great to see so many of you in person.

If you work with pregnant women and/or young children (aged 0-5) and families - we have online and face-to-face training courses to help equip you with the 'dental health basics' for children along with practical tools and resources to help put your learning into practice.

From midwives and maternal and child health nurses to early childhood educators, supported playgroup facilitators and librarians – we can all work together to make sure families have what they need to be able to grow and thrive.

Contact healthpromotion@dhsv.org.au



Research in the spotlight: Vaping and Oral health

The risks of vaping are becoming increasingly clear. In a recent study, it was found that vaping increases the risk of cavities.

According to research published in the Journal of the American Dental Association (Nov 2022), people who vape were found to have a higher risk of developing tooth decay and periodontal disease. While it is impossible to say with certainty that vaping causes tooth decay, the study's lead researcher claims that there is most likely a link between the two.

Researchers reviewed thousands of patient records from a university dental clinic and found people who reported vaping were at higher risk of tooth decay and cavities than people who said they didn't vape. Karina Irua who led the study Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in Boston, USA, said, "The current hypothesis is that vaping may cause dry mouth, depriving the oral cavity of its ability to self-cleanse through saliva." She also explained that dental bacteria appears to become virulent and aggressive when exposed to e-cigarette vapor.

This research is not the first to suggest a link between tooth decay and vaping. A 2017-18 survey of 4,600 people in the US found those who currently used e-cigarettes were more likely to have untreated cavities than their non-smoking counterparts. Another 2021 study found that e-cigarette users had different oral microbiomes compared to those who do not smoke or vape.



[Read more about the research here](#)



[Read about E-cigarettes on the Cancer Council website](#)

“Values and frames that motivate change”

Healthy Families Healthy
Smiles Annual Forum

SAVE THE DATE

Wed 7 June 2023

Join us for our Annual Forum as we reflect on the work we do together to support pregnant women, children and families with oral health.

We'll also generate some new thinking and ideas. Mark Chenery, Co-Founder & Director of Common Cause Australia, will present a practical session on why and how to apply a values-based messaging approach to communicate oral health messages to families and children and motivate change.

More details to come.

get in touch

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