

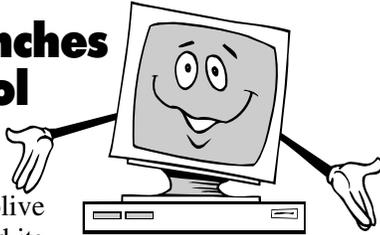
Focus on

Fluoride

This newsletter is designed to share information on school fluoride programs with administrators, principals, and teachers. PLEASE ROUTE THIS newsletter to staff working with the school fluoride program.

Vol. 6, No. 1 February 2001

Colgate Launches Online School Curriculum



The Colgate-Palmolive Company has launched its first-ever online school curriculum as part of its Bright Smiles, Bright Futures oral health education program. The online education program is featured on a new website dedicated to oral health education at <http://www.Colgatebsbf.com>.

In addition to the online education materials, Colgate has added a new interactive section that promotes oral health education with activities for students, parents and teachers. The section for teachers includes lesson plans and instructions for applying the activities in the classroom. In the section for parents, activities for the family encourage everyone to participate in games that reinforce key oral health education messages.

Activities for children on the new site include a virtual world tour that allows children to visit other countries and learn about dental care in different parts of the world, as well as interactive games such as "Fishy Friends" and "Animal Antics," with tips about oral health care and a brushing challenge that encourages brushing twice a day.

Annual Report Time

The annual report of program participation was sent to your school in January. Please be sure to fill it out and return it. Since we are a federally funded program, we must report this data for continued funding.

Dental Health Education Sessions Available

The staff of the Oral Health Program has designed oral health presentations for children in preschool through grade six that are age appropriate and sequential, and that include follow-up activities to promote the development of healthy habits. Call your regional consultant to set up a time if you are interested.

February Is National Children's Dental Health Month

"Sport a Winning Smile"

is the theme for National Children's Dental Health Month.

This year's campaign features Dudley the Dinosaur and his pals in an Olympic theme. To help you "Sport a Winning Smile," follow these recommendations:

- **Brush and floss each day.**
- **Eat nutritious foods.**
- **Have regular dental checkups.**

Activities that can be incorporated in your lesson plans include:

- ✓ Create an oral health bulletin board.
- ✓ Hold a dental health essay or limerick contest. Children could complete a sentence such as "The best thing about a person's smile is . . ." or "My smile is important because . . ."
- ✓ Hold a dental health coloring or art contest. Use the theme "Sport a Winning Smile," and ask children to draw pictures of themselves with big smiles and stars in the background. You also may use one of the coloring sheets enclosed with this newsletter.
- ✓ Show a dental health video for children.
- ✓ Have students produce a dental health play.
- ✓ Place an article about oral health in your school newsletter. Feel free to use any information found in this *Focus On Fluoride* newsletter.
- ✓ Have your class check out these dental websites for kids:
www.adha.org/kidstuff/index.html
www.crest.com
www.colgate.com

- ✓ Spell dental terms.
- ✓ Invite a dental professional to your classroom to inform children about proper oral health habits.
- ✓ Take a field trip to a local dental office and write a report about the visit.
- ✓ Hold a "sugarfast" day at your school. Encourage children not to eat any foods with added sugar during that day.



Tooth Friendly Eating . . .

Understanding the relationship of good nutrition to oral health begins with knowing some basic facts about food and how different foods affect teeth.



• **Sugars and starches can cause tooth decay.** Sugars and cooked starches, which break down into sugars in the mouth, are carbohydrates. When these foods are left in the mouth, they mix with the plaque bacteria on teeth and produce acid. These acids “eat into” the tooth enamel, causing cavities. One way to deal with this problem is to eat foods that contain sugars during meals. Saliva production increases during a meal and helps to neutralize acid production and to rinse food particles from the mouth.

• **Frequent snacking increases the risk of cavities.** How frequently one snacks during the day has a greater impact on cavity risk than how much one eats each time. If three pieces of candy are eaten at one time, the teeth are exposed to acid for about 30 minutes. But snacking on three candies -- one every half hour -- exposes teeth to acid for up to 90 minutes. Besides how often you snack, the length of time food is in your mouth plays a role in tooth decay.

• **Sticky foods cling to and between the teeth longer, increasing the length of time the acid attacks the teeth.** Examples of sticky foods are raisins, dried fruits, granola bars, gum drops, toffee and fruit rollups. Sucking on foods like lollipops and hard candies or drinking soda pop increases the time sugar comes in contact with teeth and, therefore, increases the chances for cavities.

Some research indicates that certain foods -- such as aged cheese, peanuts or sugar-free chewing gum -- may be “friendly” to teeth. Eating these foods along with or after foods that contain carbohydrates may help to counter the effects of acids produced by plaque bacteria.

Encourage children to snack on healthy foods and discourage them from snacking on foods that are not as healthy for their teeth. Encourage these tooth-friendly snacks: raw vegetables, cheese, milk, yogurt, apples and peanuts.

Other ways to improve oral health include brushing with a fluoride toothpaste twice a day, cleaning between teeth once a day and visiting the dentist regularly.

Did You Know?

The number of women entering dentistry is growing. About 40 percent of dental students today are women.

Dental Mentors Program

North Dakota has a shortage of dentists in many areas of the state. During the past 10 years, the state has lost an average of 12 dentists per year while getting only six new ones each year. With a net loss of six dentists per year, the North Dakota Dental Association recognized the need to find ways to encourage young people to pursue careers in dentistry. In response, the Association has developed a dental mentors program. Information about the need for dentists has been shared with career counselors in high schools and universities in the state. A list of dental mentors was created to help schools link an interested student with an area dentist.

For more information about the dental mentors program, contact the Oral Health Program at 701.328.4930 or 1.800.472.2286 (toll-free).

Regional Oral Health Consultants

NORTHEAST REGION

Barbara Collins, RDH
701.284.6899

SOUTHEAST REGION

Hollie Maas-Harrington, BS, RDH
701.683.9072

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

Lauri Johnson, RDH
701.385.3277

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Judy Ryen, RDH
701.255.4766

SOUTHWEST CENTRAL REGION

Lori Jacobs, RDH
701.255.7361

NORTHWEST REGION

Tracey Haugenoe, RDH
701.774.8708

SOUTHWEST REGION

Carla Kelly, RDH
701.523.3423

— STATE OFFICE —

Kathleen Mangskau, RDH, MPA
Oral Health Program Director
701.328.2356
1.800.472.2286 (toll-free)



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Oral Health Program
Division of Maternal & Child Health
North Dakota Department of Health
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 301
Bismarck, N.D. 58505-0200

Interim Health Officer: Robert A. Barnett
Section Chief: Darleen Bartz
Division Director: Sandra Anseth
Editor: Kathleen Mangskau
Associate Editor: Judy Ryen

Supplies...

If you need supplies for your school fluoride program, call: 701.328.4930 • 1.800.472.2286 • Fax: 701.328.1412