



FALL 2010



HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Healthy Smiles Ontario

What is Healthy Smiles Ontario?

Healthy Smiles Ontario is a new program for kids 17 and under who do not have access to any form of dental coverage. If eligible, your kids will get regular dental services at no cost to you.

Who is eligible?

Kids 17 and under may be eligible if:

- They are residents of Ontario;
- They are members of a household with an Adjusted Family Net Income of \$20,000 per year or below; and
- They do not have access to any form of dental coverage (including other government-funded programs, like Ontario Works).

To find out more about the eligibility requirements for Healthy Smiles Ontario and the documents required to verify eligibility, call the ServiceOntario INFOline toll-free at 1-866-532-3161 (TTY toll-free at 1-800-387-5559), visit ontario.ca/healthysmiles or contact the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit.

How do I enroll?

You need to contact your local public health unit to enroll. Your public health unit will also assist you with the application process, which involves completing a form and



showing required documentation.

What services are covered?

- Regular visits to a licensed dental provider, such as a dentist or dental hygienist
- Cleaning
- Fillings
- X-rays
- Scaling
- And more

What services are not covered?

- Cosmetic dentistry, such as teeth whitening
- Orthodontics, such as braces
- Emergency oral health care

If a child 17 and under has an urgent or emergency oral health issue, services may be covered under the Children in Need of Treatment (CINOT) program. Please contact your local public health unit or go to ontario.ca/cinot to find out more.

Where can my child access dental care as part of Healthy Smiles Ontario?

Once the application process is com-

plete, your local public health unit will inform you of the dental service options available in your community. This can include dental providers in private practice and/or a public health unit or community dental clinic, depending on where you live.

Can my child see my own dentist?

Your child may be able to continue to see your dentist if they participate in the Healthy Smiles Ontario program. If your dentist is not participating in the program, you can contact an independent dentist or dental hygienist in your area to find out if they are participating in the program.

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Common Childhood Illnesses

Small children share many things such as toys, food, pets, treasures, even germs and body fluids. You can often see children wiping their noses with their hands and then sharing their snacks (and other things) with their friends. They are taught that sharing is good and most children do it well.

When they share germs however, it is not such a good thing. As any parent of small children know, when kids spend a lot of time together someone is bound to get sick. Kids aren't known for washing their hands when they should, or sneezing/coughing into their sleeves, so they spread germs very easily. It could be a cold or the sniffles, or something more serious like the flu or German Measles (Rubella). Although there are vaccinations that can protect them from some of these dangerous diseases, not all children get immunized.

If your child gets sick, they should NOT go to school/daycare. Keeping them at home when they're sick is very important to help prevent serious outbreaks of disease in the schools. These diseases are spread from one child to another and it can happen before you know it. Some sicknesses, like chicken pox, are contagious before the spots show up.

Enclosed in this newsletter is a list of common childhood illnesses that require you to keep your child(ren) at home until they are no longer able to make other people sick. It also lists the symptoms, how it is spread, and how long your children should remain at home. It includes diseases such as chicken pox, impetigo, scabies, mumps, pinkeye, whooping cough and more.

As parents, it is our responsibility to help prevent the spread of disease as best we can and that includes teaching our children proper handwashing as well as keeping our children home when they are sick.

Submitted by Leslee Wilson, Health Inspector.

Tick Talk

Autumn is a great time for kids to be playing outdoors and developing a curiosity about nature. However, when your child is playing outdoors in grassy or wooded areas, you should take steps to protect them from tick bites. Ticks are most active in the summer, but they can be active during warm periods later into the fall. Although most tick bites do not cause serious illnesses, those from the blacklegged tick (often called the deer tick) can, in some cases, transmit Lyme disease.

Ticks wait on the tips of bushes and tall grasses and attach themselves to animals and people when they brush past. Young ticks, called nymphs, are about the size of a poppy seed, making them hard to see. Adult deer ticks are

about the size of a sesame seed, and orange-brown in colour:

A red circular "bull's-eye" rash at the site of the tick bite is an early sign of Lyme disease. If you or your child has been bitten, or you suspect that you have been bitten, see your doctor immediately. Particularly when detected early, Lyme disease is usually successfully treated with antibiotics.

How to prevent Lyme disease

- When walking in wooded or grassy areas, wear shoes, long pants tucked into your socks, a long-sleeved shirt, a hat and gloves. Wearing light colored clothing also makes spotting ticks easier.
- Stick to trails and avoid walking through low bushes and long grass.

- Check yourself, your children and your pets for ticks. Make sure to look in the armpits, backs of the knees, groin area and scalp.
- Use insect repellents containing DEET. Read the label when using any repellent, especially when using them on young children.

Tick Removal

Using needle-nosed tweezers, gently grasp the tick near its head or mouth, close to the skin. Don't squeeze or crush the tick, but pull slowly upward. Do not try to burn or smother the tick. If removed off of a human, the tick can be submitted to the Health Unit for identification and, if applicable, testing for Lyme disease.

Enjoy the beauty of autumn time, but without a twist of Lyme. Don't get sick! Avoid the tick!

Submitted by Josh Daley, Health Promoter.



MAKE THIS HALLOWEEN A HAPPY, FUN AND SAFE HOLIDAY!

Four times as many children are injured on Halloween as on any other night of the year. Some of these injuries are serious and many are the results of a fall. Here are some tips to keep your children safe this Halloween.

1. All children should be accompanied by an adult when they go trick or treating. Keep your group together at all times.
2. If you drive your children from house to house, make sure they exit the car on the sidewalk side, not the street.
3. In their excitement children often take the shortest route to the next house rather than the safest route. Be sure the children in your care walk on the sidewalk rather than crossing lawns where obstacles might not be visible in the dark.
4. Make sure the children cross the street at the corner and never dash between parked cars.
5. Children should use flashlights and wear reflective clothing.
6. Be sure your child can see well. Don't allow masks or hats that obscure his/her vision.
7. To prevent tripping make sure the child's costume is not too large or too long.
8. Tell your children to keep their candy in their bags until you have a chance to inspect them carefully. Young children should not eat treats which could pose choking hazards. Watch out for peanuts, popcorn, and small hard candies.
9. Don't allow your children to visit outside your neighbourhood or go to homes that are not clearly lit.
10. Consider alternatives to Trick-or-Treat such as neighbourhood parties or haunted houses.
11. Remember that preschoolers are often frightened by scary masks and costumes. Plan to unmask friends who come to the door and explain to your child that it's really someone they know just pretending to be a monster.

Submitted by Karin Marks, Injury Prevention Health Promoter

How to Have a Tooth-Friendly Halloween

At Halloween time, it's natural to be concerned about the effects of candy on your children's teeth. Here are some tips on protecting children's dental health while still letting them enjoy that special occasion.

✓ Agree on limits.

Before Halloween, talk with your kids and let them know how much candy they will be allowed to eat per day. There should be limits for their overall health, as well as their oral health. Setting limits in advance will avoid disagreements and disappointment later. Ration your children's treats over several days. They can select a few pieces to have along with their healthy snack or at meals.

✓ Divide and conquer.

Parents can divide candy into categories such as "for school" or "at home" so that they can monitor brushing and candy intake. There are a few treats that kids should avoid if brushing immediately isn't an option: lollipops, hard candy, toffees and jujubes, which stay in the mouth or get stuck in teeth.

✓ Brush and floss.

We all know that Halloween to most children means candy. To help keep

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How to Have a Tooth Friendly Halloween
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cavities away and maintain your child's good dental health this Halloween, remember to have them brush and floss after eating sugary treats. Parents should keep a close eye on how well kids are brushing, especially after Halloween. The length of time kids brush is also important. Using an egg timer is a great tool to ensure kids are brushing long enough.

Some Alternatives to Candy

If you want to try something different this year instead of giving out Halloween candy, check out these fun alternatives for Halloween night.

- Spider rings or vampire teeth
- Halloween stickers or temporary tattoos
- Halloween pencils and erasers
- Sugar-free gum
- Toothbrushes

Adapted from *How to Have a Tooth-Friendly Halloween fact sheet* www.hnhu.org

Cyber Bullying and Tips for Parents to Protect Children

With the advances in technology, cyber bullying is a growing concern to children in communities and schools across the country. Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone messages, text messaging and social networking sites such as Facebook. It includes threats, insults, posting damaging or embarrassing photos online, spreading rumours over social networking pages and identity theft. Steps families and schools can use to stop cyber bullying include:

- Teach your kids to tell adults if they're bullied.
- Become involved in your schools anti-bullying program.
- Schools should invite law enforcement to talk with kids.
- Watch for signs your child may be a victim.
- Keep computers in a common area in your home.
- Save cyber bullying messages.
- Teach kids not to respond or to say stop.
- Teach kids not to give out private information.
- File complaints with Internet and phone service providers.
- Discuss cyber bullying and Internet safety.



Facebook is one social networking site that has gained attention for its level of security and privacy flaws. According to expert Chris Vollum of Social Media Trust, creator of Facebook 101, a workshop aimed at turning parents and kids to internet safety, 18 million of Canadians use Facebook and "It is the way kids connect their pad and pencil today". Vollum is not against the use of Facebook but feels that both parents and kids need to know how to effectively apply their Facebook profile settings to minimize privacy breaches and proactively defend against cyber bullying as Facebook has become a major cyber bullying tool and an invasion of privacy. Parents need to communicate with their kids and work alongside them to have computer house rules.

For more information on National Bullying Awareness Week visit www.nameit2changeit.ca.

Submitted by Mona Aaltonen, Public Health Nurse.

National Bullying Awareness week: November 14 - 20, 2010