



Teachers - You can be an Oral Health Champion

AN ORAL HEALTH MESSAGE FROM THE COLLEGE OF DENTAL HYGIENISTS OF NOVA SCOTIA

Did you know that in spite of a children's oral health program that provides free basic dental care to children from birth to age 10, there are many children in Nova Scotia elementary schools who have dental disease and are NOT getting to the dentist?

As you interact with children on a daily basis you may notice a child who is having difficulty attending to tasks or who is demonstrating anxiety, fatigue, irritability, depression or withdrawal from normal activities. These can be signs of pain and children are often unable to verbalize their dental pain.

Other Signs include

- Front teeth that are brown or black
- A swollen cheek, neck or underside of the chin
- A "bubble" located on the gum above or below a tooth

If a child complains of tooth or jaw pain accompanied by a swollen cheek and possibly a fever, this should be considered a dental emergency and immediate treatment is required.

April is Oral Health Month and to celebrate the College of Dental Hygienists of Nova Scotia brings you this very important message on how you can be an oral health champion to the children in your school.

If you think one of your students may be in need of dental treatment and you are comfortable talking to the parent

- First find out if they have a family dentist
- Advise them of the free services available through the Children's Oral Health Program in Nova Scotia.

Depending on the situation you may wish to contact the school guidance or principal who can call a Public Health Services Dental Hygienist who will

- Examine the child with parental consent
- Provide help finding a dentist and treatment