

MEDIA RELEASE

16 September, 2015

Oral health team keep healthy mouths smiling across Southern Downs

THE Southern Downs Oral Health team is defying the dentist stereotype with eager local residents lining up to receive services.

In the past 12 months, the team of oral health clinicians has become a sought-after attraction at local events and expos.

Slipping into their alter egos as tooth fairies and scientists, the dental staff members have been spreading their messages far and wide.

“The team’s oral health promotion was really taken to another level when we staged the ‘Healthy Mouth, Healthy Me’ road shows last year in five different locations,” Southern Downs Senior Oral Health Therapist Lisa Rippon said.

“The road shows were aimed at encouraging the community to adopt healthy lifestyle choices and behaviours to reduce dental diseases.

“We had interactive displays, visits from the tooth fairy and fun activities that really captured the imagination of approximately 2000 children and adults who visited us.”

Since that time, the talents of the team both in the dental clinic and out, have become well known.

“We have been so busy that we have had to unfortunately turn down some opportunities,” Ms Rippon said.

“It’s good to be popular but disappointing when we can’t get to every event.”

To avoid disappointment, Ms Rippon is encouraging local schools, groups or community organisations who are interested in learning more about oral health to contact her well in advance of their event.

The team will take part in a disability week event in Warwick and Spring Fair at Warwick West State School this month.

Southern Downs Oral Health team’s tips for a healthier mouth:

- Use only a soft toothbrush with a small head. Medium and hard toothbrushes can damage teeth and gums.
- Brush morning and night with a fluoride toothpaste. Only a pea-size amount is needed; any more is a waste. And spit out but don’t rinse out after brushing as the fluoride in the toothpaste is what helps to keep teeth strong. At night time make tooth brushing the last thing to be done before bed.

- Drink more plain water and “swish, swash, swallow”. It is unrealistic to expect people to brush after each time they eat so it is recommended that after every meal to have a mouthful of plain water and swish it around your mouth to clear your mouth of any foodstuffs thus decreasing the damage from leftover acid and sugars to the teeth.
- Regular dental check-ups with your Oral Health professional

Caption: Tooth fairy and Warwick Oral Health Therapist Jo Gratton shares the message of good oral hygiene to prep school student Rhiannon Gaal at a recent health expo.

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