

COUNTY HOSPITAL LAUNCHES NATIONAL SMILE MONTH IN DORSET

MUMS and Dads with young children are learning top tips for protecting their kids' teeth from the Oral Health Promotion team at Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

The team is supporting National Smile Month with sessions at children's centres across the county. First up was the Bridport Children's Centre at St Mary's School. Debbie Chandler and Alison Joy met parents with children aged under five and gave one-to-one advice on looking after youngsters' teeth. They also gave out oral health packs for the children attending on the day. The packs contained a child's toothbrush, toothpaste and a dental leaflet.

Oral Health Promoter Debbie Chandler said: 'This year's campaign is all about brushing for general health. If you have a healthy mouth you can eat normally. It's very important that parents know how to reduce the risks of tooth decay.

'We advise parents to limit sugary foods to mealtimes and provide healthy snacks in between. Bread sticks, cheese, carrot sticks and toast are good choices, with milk or water to drink.'

The team is also planning to visit children's centres in Blandford, Wimborne, Corfe Mullen, Sturminster Newton and Weymouth.

National Smile Month 2009 takes place between May 17 and June 16 under the tagline 'Look After Yourself, Brush for Health.'

Run by the British Dental Health Foundation, the campaign highlights how looking after your mouth helps prevent disease in other parts of your body. Research has linked gum disease to heart disease, diabetes, strokes and premature and low birth weight babies.

Adults and children should brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cut down on sugary foods and drinks and visit the dentist regularly.

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