



MEDIA RELEASE

Kindergartens Smile For Miles!

2 August 2016

August 1-7 is Dental Health Week, and the oral health of children in the Mildura area is about to get a boost with the Sunraysia Community Health Services Dental Team and Healthy Together Mildura announcing the return of the Smiles 4 Miles Program to Kindergartens in the region.

Smiles 4 Miles is a Dental Health Services Victoria program which assists Kindergartens and Early Childhood Services to encourage and promote good oral health habits and healthy eating among children in their care. The program is based on the World Health Organization's Framework, an internationally recognised best practice approach.

“The Smiles 4 Miles Program was run in the region some years back, and we are very excited to have it back. Encouraging good oral health habits with pre-schoolers and their families is vitally important. We know that good oral health is essential to your overall health and wellbeing, and we also know that good habits are learned early in life” said Shelley Faulks, General Manager of Community Programs at SCHS.

Tooth decay is Australia’s most common health problem, and dental conditions are the most common cause of potentially preventable hospitalisations in Victorian's aged 0-19 years. In the Mildura region the hospital admission rates for dental conditions in children aged 0-4 years in Mildura is 10.7 children per 1000, which is higher than the state average of 4.8 children.

At this stage 10 Kindergartens in the region have signed-up to be part of the initiative and will work with the SCHS Dental Team and Healthy Together Mildura to promote drinking water, eating a wide variety of ‘everyday’ foods and brushing twice a day.

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: Interactive Oral Health Promotion Session with Mothers and children attending the Mildura District Aboriginal Health Service Playgroup and SCHS Staff, 1 - 2.30pm Wednesday 3 August, at the Total Learning Centre, Twelfth Street Mildura.

END

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