

# Dental Health Policy

## 1. Objective

Annie Dennis Children's Centre (ADCC) will promote good dental and oral health in children in order to reduce the incidence of dental cavities and will seek to prevent and manage dental trauma in children.

## 2. Definitions

**Staff:** Includes permanent, agency, casual, long and short term appointments.

## 3. Current literature on dental health care

Effective dental and oral care is important for children's current and future health and wellbeing. Care of the teeth and mouth often begins at home, however, carers and staff can play a significant role in either supporting or introducing strategies for dental care for dental care in child care and at home. Effective dental health for children is closely related to the development of healthy adult teeth.

## 4. Dental and Oral Health

ADCC will promote good dental and oral hygiene behaviour by encouraging children to:

- **Eat well**, supporting the principles of healthy eating
- **Drink well**, serving children water or milk at morning tea, lunchtime and afternoon tea
- **Clean well**, reinforcing to children and parents the value of good oral hygiene and tooth brushing. Children who are old enough will be encouraged to rinse their mouth with water after each meal
- **Play well**, encouraging the children to play safely with the supervision of an adult
- **Stay well**, providing information to parents regarding the importance of regular dental check ups.

### 4.1 Brushing teeth

A child's home environment is the most important environment in maintaining and improving their oral health. To maintain oral health, children need to be encouraged to develop healthy daily habits. These habits include tooth brushing every morning and before bed at night. An adult needs to assist with cleaning each day. Tooth brushing at other times during the day is unnecessary.

ADCC does not encourage children at the centre to brush their teeth in a group environment as the swapping of toothbrushes can spread infections. Staff will encourage children to brush their teeth at home by promoting healthy dental practices through the Centre's programs, experiences and discussions with the children.

## 4.2 Dummies and bottles

ADCC staff will not promote the following practices

- place children to bed with a bottle of fluid other than water, or
- place food or other substances on children's dummies or,
- permit children to carry and suck from a bottle of fluid other than water throughout the day.

## 4.3 Education

ADCC will promote good oral health and hygiene through the provision of educational material, including:

- dental health tip sheets
- health displays
- brochures and posters
- educational resources, and
- information on local pre-school community dental services

## 5. Prevention of Dental Trauma

ADCC will seek to prevent and manage any dental trauma in children at the Centre by:

- Recording the name, address and phone number of a child's dentist and after hours or emergency dentist or dental clinic at the time of enrolment
- Ensuring all staff have current first aid training to be able to deal with a dental emergency and apply first aid for a dental injury, and
- Reporting to the parents any sign of tooth cavities , accident, injury or suspected injury to teeth and gums.

The **Dental Health policy** is linked to the *National Early Years Learning Framework*.

Outcome 3: children have a strong sense of wellbeing  
*Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing*

Outcome 1: children have a strong sense of identity  
*Children develop their emerging autonomy , inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency*

**Date:** Approved by the COM 16 February 2011

**Next review date:** February 2013

### Key Source Documents

Dental Health Services Victoria, *Oral Health Promotion: Resource Pack for Children's Services* (October 2003)

[www.cyh.com](http://www.cyh.com) Parenting and Child Health topics, teeth and teethcare (25 Aug 2010)