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Tooth brushing schemes in schools, tackling inequalities in health

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Purpose: This paper assesses the effectiveness of a tooth brushing activity delivered in primary schools in the Emirate of Dubai, UAE as part of a preventive program. The tooth brushing activity was designed with the intention of improving the oral health of young children and emphasizes on the importance of daily good oral hygiene habits.

Materials & Methods: The evaluation was based on a pre and post visible plaque index examination, an interview with the school nurse responsible for the follow up and a feedback questionnaire for the parents.

Results: Children accepted the activity and they enjoyed participating in daily tooth brushing. Children were more aware of the importance of daily brushing and the consequences of poor oral hygiene. The activity was more successful when the school administration and school nurse embraced and accepted the idea of their students brushing daily in schools. Feedback from the parents showed children involvement in such an activity were more keen to brush at home and had a positive influence on their siblings.

Conclusions: The results of the activity suggest that tooth brushing in schools could be an effective method to encourage and enforce good oral hygiene habits. This paper gives an overview on how this could be implemented and the possibility of setting up policies and guidelines to govern its application in all schools of Dubai.

Recent Publications:

1. Shiamaa Shihab Al Mashhadani et al. (2017) National survey of the Oral health status of the school children in Dubai, UAE. EC Dental Science. 8.2:48-58.
2. Shiamaa Shihab Al Mashhadani et al. (2017) Oral health policies, tackling oral health inequalities in schoolchildren. EC Dental Science. 12.6:250-253.
3. Shiamaa Shihab Al Mashhadani (2017) Toothbrushing schemes in Dubai schools, a step forward in oral health prevention. 11.3:88-94.
4. Shiamaa Shihab Al Mashhadani (2015) Dubai Smiles Healthy Manual. Dubai Health Authority. 1-44.

Biography

Shiamaa Shihab Al Mashhadani has her expertise in dental public health, preventive programs and oral systemic approaches to improve the oral health status of the population. She has special interest in tackling inequalities in oral health and improving the oral health of people with disabilities. She believes in empowering the community with preventive skills is the key to a healthy and happy community through various training programs she has set up and enhancing the oral health literacy of the community. She is very enthusiastic to experiment creative and innovative solutions to improve oral and dental care.

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