

## DENTAL HEALTH WEEK – 4-10 AUGUST 2008 “THE CARING GENERATION”

The Australian Dental Association's (ADA) Dental Health Week theme for 2008 is "The Caring Generation". This addresses anyone who may be caring for "another or others" – children (from babies to teens); older adults; a person with special needs (medical, dental, physical or psychological); a partner; a family member or a friend. A healthy mouth enhances one's quality of life and wellbeing at any age and every stage.

"This year the ADA has devised a dental health programme that, while specifically targeted to children, provides some essential information for all Australians to help them maintain good oral health. The ADA is proud of its efforts to support promotion of the dental health of Australians. It sees insufficient attention is being given to oral health promotion by governments and yearly calls upon its members to fund these dental health education programmes," said Dr John Matthews, President of the ADA.

This year's Dental Health Week theme specifically targets 30-50 year-olds. The ADA is promoting a 7 Day Dental Bootcamp to challenge Australians to take part in an online programme.

The reward for those who complete the programme is a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums. Although the 7 Day Dental Bootcamp is designed to help children, adults will also benefit from following the seven steps. It's a fact that most people don't know the full story when it comes to dental health, hygiene and diet. The ADA has put together the Bootcamp Programme of activities that parents can encourage their children to do at home. It will give them basic training in good dental health-care and sharpen their knowledge of what goes on inside their mouths. Each day will provide a new challenge and have children thinking about

how their mouths work and how important it is to look after them. Kids will graduate, after completing the 7 Day Dental Bootcamp, with the knowledge to maintain great dental health for a whole lifetime. This is important as more and more research is showing the intrinsic link between oral health and overall health. The ADA is encouraging young people to recognise the value of investing in good dental health now.

The 7 Day Dental Bootcamp will provide seven daily easy-to-follow steps in maintaining good oral health. These include:

- Brushing
- Flossing
- Tongue cleaning
- Tooth-friendly foods
- Tooth-friendly drinks
- The right toothbrush
- Dental check-ups

The Bootcamp can be commenced at any time. Just visit the website at [www.dentalhealthweek.com.au](http://www.dentalhealthweek.com.au) and choose a start date then work through the seven steps to healthy teeth.

Additionally, there are children's activity sheets available as part of the ADA's Dental Health Week which parents, teachers and the children themselves can use. For example:

### Parents:

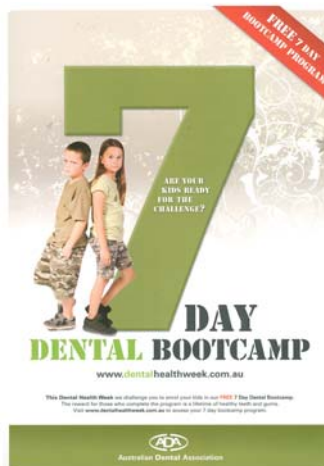
There is information for parents on a range of topics including fluoride, diet and first aid for children's teeth. There is also information about adult dental health issues.

### Teachers:

There are classroom resources for teachers to use with kids aged 4-10 covering the basics of oral anatomy, oral hygiene and care and diet for healthy teeth.

### Kids:

If you want to give your children some extra "Bootcamp Homework" then there are some tricky brain-teasers to test their dental health knowledge.



As part of Dental Health Week, the ADA has also produced three targeted consumer fact sheets for "The Caring Generation":

### Dental Erosion – silent and costly

Dental erosion is the loss of tooth structure due to exposure to acids. Enamel, which is the hardest material in the body, is the protective cover on teeth that protects the dentine (which is the inside part of the tooth), and the pulp which is made up of nerves and blood vessels.

### Periodontal Disease – from your teeth to your heart

Periodontal disease, also known as periodontitis, is a chronic bacterial infection of the gums and teeth. Harmful bacterial are contained in a colourless, sticky film called "plaque" that deposits on teeth, particularly around the gum line.

### Receding Gums and Decay – getting a little long in the tooth?

Receding gums, often coined, "getting long in the tooth", are not a direct result of natural ageing. A common cause can be the development of inflammation within the gum. This eventually undermines the gums, resulting in shrinkage and recession of gums.

To read more visit the ADA's Dental Health Week website:  
[www.dentalhealthweek.com.au](http://www.dentalhealthweek.com.au)

Contacts: Dr John E Matthews, President

All correspondence to: Australian Dental Association Inc, PO Box 520 St Leonards NSW 1590

Tel: 02 9906 4412

Fax: 02 9906 4736

Email: [adainc@ada.org.au](mailto:adainc@ada.org.au)

Mr Robert Boyd-Boland, Chief Executive Officer