



MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE USE
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CHRISTMAS CHEER BRINGS DENTAL FEAR

The Australian Dental Association SA Branch (ADASA) today issued a warning to parents that children suffer more mouth, lip and teeth injuries over the Christmas holiday period than at any other time of the year.

Last year, the ADASA emergency hotline has received a record 477 calls seeking urgent dental assistance between December 22nd and January 8th. This equates to over 26 calls a day.

They received a staggering 66 calls on Christmas Day.

According to Dr Angelo Papageorgiou from the Australian Dental Association (SA Branch) accidents often occur when children try out new presents such as trampolines, skateboards, play equipment and bicycles.

“The backyard pool is also a danger zone and parents are urged to ensure that their children know basic safe behaviour.”

“With so many things happening at once in the home during Christmas, children may be unsupervised just when they need it most, as well as being unfamiliar with their new toys and this leads to an increased risk of accidents.”

“More than a third of dental and facial injuries occur around the home and nearly three quarters of victims are boys.”

“In addition, injuries are mostly sustained in and around the home, closely followed by the garden, then the driveway.”

“Painful and permanent injuries such as broken, displaced or knocked out teeth, split lips and even fractured jaws and cheekbones bones can occur in an instant.”

“To reduce or avoid injuries, we advise parents to supervise children more closely than normal during the holiday period.”

“With new toys, parents need to think about the risks posed and guide children in their safe use.”

“In some cases, even a professionally fitted mouthguard could mean the difference between a Christmas smile or Christmas in the dental chair.”

“Christmas is a happy time spent with family and friends. The last thing people want or expect is a dental emergency, particularly when it could easily be avoided,” says Dr. Papageorgiou said.

Parents are advised that if a child suffers a dental injury, they should call their family dentist first or call the Association’s emergency number any time during the Christmas holiday period on 08 8272 8111.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

**DR ANGELO PAPAGEORGIU
PH: 0417 815 590**

**SIMON HATCHER
0419 780 071**

TIPS FOR AVOIDING DENTAL TRAUMA

- ⇒ Closely supervise children when playing
- ⇒ For young children, do not use baby walkers
- ⇒ Do not let children use roller blades, bicycles, skates or skateboards without protection

Teach children to:

- ⇒ Watch out for possible obstructions that they can trip themselves up on or fall onto
- ⇒ Not push when playing.
- ⇒ Stay seated on swings and not to jump off when the swing is in motion
- ⇒ Use the stairs when getting out of the swimming pool

If the child participates in sports such as rugby, hockey, karate, riding on a bike, winter sports (i.e. skiing) a skateboard or any activity that involves potential trauma to the facial area, make sure that the child uses a helmet or mouth protector.