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Dental Health Week 2017 – Oral Health for Busy Lives August 7 to 13

When was the last time you went to the dentist?

As Australians' lives grow busier, their oral health can suffer. A national survey by the Australian Dental Association (ADA) has found that 65 per cent of people hadn't visited the dentist in more than two years, while 16 per cent said they didn't have time to go to the dentist*.

Libby Trickett knows that oral hygiene can be overlooked when people are juggling work, family and other commitments. The four-time Olympic gold-medal winning swimmer now has her hands full as a radio announcer, mental health ambassador and mother to toddler Poppy. Known for her beaming smile, Libby still makes time to floss, brush her teeth twice a day and visit her dentist regularly.

"Everyone is so busy these days that our oral health and visits to the dentist may be forgotten," said Libby Trickett, the ADA Dental Health Week ambassador. "But it only takes a few minutes of brushing and flossing a day to keep our teeth clean and gums healthy."

Dental Health Week is the perfect time to book a dental check-up and to teach kids about the importance of healthy eating and cleaning their teeth."

Oral Health for Busy Lives is the theme for this year's Dental Health Week, which runs from August 7 to 13.

Five quick tips for good dental health:

1. Make time to brush your teeth twice daily thoroughly, including two minutes in the morning and two minutes at night – don't go to bed without brushing your teeth.
2. Limit your intake of sugary foods and drinks, and avoid snacking and grazing throughout the day.
3. Clean in-between your teeth with interdental brushes or floss daily.
4. Drink more water (especially tap water).
5. Prioritise your dental appointments - remember plenty of dentists have extended opening hours during the week and are open on the weekends.

"This year we wanted to emphasize the importance of caring for your oral hygiene every day," said Professor David Manton, the Chair of the ADA's Oral Health Committee. "Dental Health Week acts as a reminder to Australians to visit their local dentist regularly and to implement healthy oral practices at home."

Research has highlighted that 68 per cent of the population only visit the dentist for specific problems, rather than for regular check-ups and preventive reasons*. This figure remains high despite more than 40 per cent of Australian children experiencing tooth decay and 30 per cent of Australian adults having untreated tooth decay.

"Our oral health is fundamental to our overall general health and our quality of life, so it is important that we make the time to take care of our oral health despite our busy schedules. Australians should be visiting the dentist proactively, rather than as a reactive measure to fix dental problems," added Professor David Manton.

For more information on the Australian Dental Association or to book an appointment to see a dentist, visit www.ada.org.au/find-a-dentist. For more on Dental Health Week, check out: www.dentalhealthweek.com.au.

You can also visit their Instagram:

@AustralianDentalAssociation or Facebook: www.facebook.com/healthyteethaustralia, using the hashtag #DentalHealthWeek.

**APMI Partners, Australian Dental Health Study, December 2016*

Notes to the Editor:

- The Australian Dental Association (ADA) is the peak national professional body representing Australia's 15,000 registered dentists, as well as dental students.
- The ADA is a not-for-profit professional membership organisation that encourages the improvement of the oral and general health of the public and works to advance and promote the ethics, art and science of dentistry.

To arrange an interview with a dentist spokesperson, or for more information on the Australian Dental Association or Dental Health Week, please contact:

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