

Health Unit Media Release

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Giving Leeds, Grenville and Lanark area Kids Healthy Smiles, McGuinty Government Launches No Cost Dental Care For Eligible Children

A new no-cost dental program is now available in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark which will help ensure that eligible kids can establish and maintain good oral health.

Accessing dental care for children can be a challenge for some Ontario families, particularly for those families without dental benefit coverage. **The new Healthy Smiles Ontario program will ensure that kids can have regular visits with a dentist or dental hygienist.** This program is anticipated to benefit over 2000 kids in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Counties. Oral health diseases are more prevalent among people with limited or no access to dental services, and children are the most vulnerable.

Administered by the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, the program will provide preventive dental care at no cost to kids who:

- Are 17 years and under.
- Are members of a household with an Adjusted Family Net Income of \$20,000 per year or less
- Don't have access to any form of dental coverage.

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit is partnering with local dentists and dental hygienist, the North Lanark Community Health Centre, Country Road Community Health Centre, Smiths Falls Community Health Centre, CPHC Gananoque Community Family Health Team and CPHC Prescott Office to ensure that clients receive the best care possible under this new program.

By making regular trips to a dentist or dental hygienist, kids will be able to prevent cavities and other dental problems that can contribute to diseases later in life. The program will give kids access to services like check-ups, cleaning, fillings, x-rays, scaling and more.

The Healthy Smiles Ontario program is part of the province's Poverty Reduction Strategy to reduce the number of children living in poverty by 25 per cent over five years, and supports the five-year Open Ontario Plan to provide more access to health care services.

Every child deserves a healthy smile. This preventive dental program will provide much needed services to those families who have previously had nowhere to turn. We are thrilled to be part of it."

-Dr. Paula Stewart, Medical Officer of Health, Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit

"The Low Income Dental initiative will benefit those 17 yrs and under in so many ways: self esteem, overall health. We are pleased to be partners in this initiative"

-Ruth Kitson, Executive Director, Community & Primary Health Care (CPHC)

Find out more by visiting www.healthunit.org or calling the Health Unit at 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685.

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