

Health Unit Media Release

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Health Unit Concerned with Oral Health of Teens

April is Oral Health month. The goal of this year's campaign is raise awareness about the dental programs offered by the Health Unit that are available to Leeds, Grenville and Lanark County residents. A person's oral health has been said to be the window to his or her entire inner and outer health. **Oral issues and pain are not always obvious especially when it comes to children. Children may be nervous or afraid to tell somebody about the pain they are experiencing.** The programs hope to catch problems early so that children and teens are healthier and as a result the community as a whole becomes healthier.

Two programs offered by the Health Unit for which children aged **0-17 years** of age may qualify if they have no other dental coverage:

- **Children In Need Of Treatment** program (CINOT) - emergency and urgent dental care OR
- **Healthy Smiles Ontario** program (HSO) - routine dental care on a semi-continual basis

Since January 2009, when CINOT expanded to include children ages 14-17, the Health Unit has had over 95 children in that age group access the program for urgent services including fillings, root canals and tooth removal.

The Canadian Dental Association states that poor oral health can affect a person's quality of life. Oral pain, missing teeth or oral infections can influence the way a person speaks, eats and socializes.

"We recognize the need for dental health care for children, whatever the age, in the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark and want to reduce the number of children who do not have access to adequate dental treatment" says Robin Cleary, Dental Co-ordinator for the Health Unit.

If you have dental health care insurance, it is important to maintain routine check-ups for your entire family, especially those under 18, for early detection and prevent of future dental problems.

Please contact the Health Unit's Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685 and ask to speak to a dental staff member or get more information at www.healthunit.org.

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