

Interview: "... Dubai Health Authority strives on the values of community wellbeing..."

By Dental Tribune MEA / CAPPmea

During this year's World Oral Health Day, Dental Tribune MEA had an opportunity to talk to Dr. Hamda Sultan Al Mesmar, Director of Dental Services Department at Dubai Health Authority's Primary Healthcare Sector.

Could you please tell us why Dubai Health Authority is involved in World Oral Health Day and why is it so important for Dubai?

The dental services department at Dubai Health Authority identifies the need of enhancing awareness amongst school-going children to reduce the prevalence of caries. The World Oral Health Day (WOHD) is one of the many platforms we use to educate the public on the importance of good oral hygiene.

In addition, World Oral Health Day is celebrated globally every year on 20th March. It is an international day to celebrate the benefits of a healthy mouth and to promote awareness of oral health.

What was the main focus of WOHD at GEMS Wellington College?

20th of March marks the world oral health day and, as children are the main target, GEMS Wellington had a multicultural perspective and interest on our goal to educate.

Children received dental screenings in our fully-equipped mobile dental van along with an educational session, focusing on the importance of dental hygiene and a healthy diet.

How can dentists in Dubai increase their own involvement with WOHD?

The dental services department at Dubai Health Authority has the opportunity to collaborate with Dubai dentists during events such as the World Oral Health Day. Everyone in the dental health profession can make a difference to reduce the prevalence of caries in the Emirate.

Is there enough awareness amongst students in Dubai on oral health, or overall wellbeing?



There is a need to increase awareness amongst students within the Emirate. Based on the survey done by the dental services department in 2013, the prevalence of caries of school students aged 5 years old was 65%; way over levels in comparison to other countries in the world.

How does the dental community in Dubai participate in WOHD?

The dental community plays a very crucial role through collaborations

and activities focused on the goal of reducing the prevalence of caries in the Emirate. There is a lot to be done in the field. This is not impossible and can be achieved through bringing like minds together.

What has Dubai Health Authority learned from this day?

Like many goals that the Dubai Health Authority strives for, the values of community wellbeing and reducing the prevalence of caries in

Dubai will be an achievement.

What kind of impact does this day have on public in general?

The community has a great role in reducing the number of dental cavities among children.

Parents, guardians, school nurses, administrators are vital in playing the role of mentors and educators in imparting good knowledge of dental care among the children. ^[1]

Smile Like You Mean It. Or do you?

New research from GUM® reveals embarrassment about teeth and gums causes Europeans to hide their smiles



By GUM Sunstar

When you want to make a great first impression on a date or a job interview, be sure to smile! Research shows that our smiles are our most powerful emotional tool and that when we have a bright, healthy smile we not only appear more likeable, we're perceived to be more competent too.¹

According to a new survey from interdental cleaning experts GUM®, around half of men and women polled across Europe like their smile,² but often feel embarrassed to flash it because they are self-conscious about their teeth and gums.³

All those surveyed in France, Germany and Spain for the launch of NEW GUM® Advanced Soft Picks®, agreed

that they are most likely to cover their smile when they're in front of an audience or trying to impress someone they find attractive.⁴ Worrying that their teeth are crooked and discoloured was the main problem for most respondents – but 18% of French said they were conscious of their gums, while around one third of Spanish (30%) and Germans (33%) said they cover their smile because they worry something is stuck in their teeth.⁵

First impressions count

The majority of those polled (36% in France, 34% in Spain and 26% in Germany) agreed that they would be most embarrassed about having leftovers in their teeth while giving a presentation at work, closely followed by being on a first date for the French (21%) and Germans (19%) and flirting with a potential date for the Spanish (18%).⁶ Impressing a partner or a relative is seen as far

less important, with just 11-14% of people in each country saying they would be embarrassed to have food in their teeth in front of their partner and just 4-6% would be embarrassed when talking to a relative.⁷

Healthy mouth, healthy smile

The research also revealed that despite the majority of respondents agreeing that oral care is 'extremely important',⁸ only a handful of people are aware of the importance of cleaning in between their teeth using interdental products such as floss and toothpicks.

In all three countries, around three quarters of people (74% in France, 68% in Spain and 72% in Germany) believe that brushing twice daily is the most important thing they can do to improve their oral health.⁹ Almost half of the French polled (45%) do not use interdental products at all, while only around a fifth of Spanish (19%) and Germans (23%) use them every day.¹⁰ In fact, although interdental products such as NEW GUM® Advanced Soft Picks® can dislodge food from teeth quickly and easily, people tend to reach for something a little more unusual. For the French, matchsticks and the cap of a ballpoint pen are the weapons of choice after a fingernail, while the Germans and Spanish prefer the tip of a straw.¹¹

Using NEW GUM® Soft Picks® Advanced offers an easy, safe and effective way to discretely clean between

teeth and remove unwanted food from your teeth, whether you're at home or out and about. The new, superior design offers improved comfort and control, making it easier to reach and remove plaque and food from even the hardest to reach teeth.

NEW Soft Picks® Advanced can be used discretely to quickly get rid of stuck food on important occasions such as a business meeting or first date or anytime you want to give your mouth an extra clean and get back your natural confidence, smile without inhibitions and radiate the real you. Between your teeth can actually remove more bacteria than simply brushing. GUM®'s Interdental range contains highly effective flossing and gum health products that can prevent, control and treat the gum and oral health issues that can compromise your smile – giving you back the confidence to smile like you mean it.

References

1. www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0749597804000743
2. Atomik Research: survey of 1000 men and women in France, Spain and Germany. Question 7 (42% in France, 55% in Spain, 49% in Germany)
3. Atomik Research: survey of 1000 men and women in France, Spain and Germany. Question 8
4. Atomik Research: survey of 1000 men and women in France, Spain and Germany. Question 12
5. Atomik Research: survey of 1000

men and women in France, Spain and Germany. Question 8 (29% of respondents in France and Spain and 33% in Germany do not like the alignment of their teeth, while 43% in France, 33% in Spain and 49% in Germany do not like the colour of their teeth)

6. Atomik Research: survey of 1000 men and women in France, Spain and Germany. Question 12

7. Atomik Research: survey of 1000 men and women in France, Spain and Germany. Question 12 (11% of French, 13% of Spanish and 14% of Germans would feel embarrassed about having food in their teeth in front of their partner, while only 5% of French, 6% of Spanish and 4% of Germans would be embarrassed in front of a relative)

8. Atomik Research: survey of 1000 men and women in France, Spain and Germany. Question 1 (67% in France, 56% in Spain, 50% in Germany)

9. Atomik Research: survey of 1000 men and women in France, Spain and Germany. Question 6

10. Atomik Research: survey of 1000 men and women in France, Spain and Germany. Question 3

11. Atomik Research: survey of 1000 men and women in France, Spain and Germany. Question 13 (55% in France, 63% in Spain and 68% in Germany use a fingernail to remove food from their teeth. In France, 14% like to use matchsticks and 13% the cap of a ballpoint pen, while 15% in Spain and 13% in Germany favour the tip of a straw). ^[1]

Where are you?

Test users wanted in UAE

EMS, the leader in Professional Prophylaxis and Periodontal Therapy is looking for 25 clinics limited in UAE to test the gold standard device „Air-Flow Master Piezon“ in their clinic in UAE in conjunction with the newest and most innovative protocol for professional prophylaxis “Guided Biofilm Therapy”.



Exclusive offer to you:

- 20% special discount for the Air-Flow Master Piezon
- Free of charge 4 boxes (16 bottles) of the PLUS powder
- Extended warranty of 2 years
- Free of charge Swiss Dental Academy Training on “Guided Biofilm Therapy” and the use of the device

Apply now by sending an e-mail to hobermeier@ems-ch.com and submit a short overview of your clinic (name, address, contact person, number of dentists and dental hygienists, equipment currently used for Prophylaxis) and why you should become one of **only 25** test users!

World Oral Health Day Celebration in Dubai, UAE

By Dental Tribune MEA / CAPPmea

DUBAI, UAE: In more than 100 countries around the world, World Oral Health Day (WOHD) is celebrated on 20th of March 2017. The main initiative of FDI is primarily to promote oral health and increase public awareness. This is also the case in the UAE.

This year's main theme is "Live Mouth Smart" – encouraging the public to regularly check their teeth and mouths. The World Oral Health Day was established to turn people's attention to the need for prevention and treatment of diseases.

On this year's World Oral Health Day (WOHD), Damian Bavhoo, Principal of GEMS Academy Silicon Oasis together with Dr Hamda Sultan Al Mesmar, Director of Dental Services Department at Dubai Health Authority (DHA) and Mr. Vincenzo Ventricelli, Vice President Philips Health

and Wellness welcomed 70 students at the GEMS Wellington Silicon Oasis School.

Mr Damian welcomed everyone present on this special day and encouraged the students to participate in all the activities that have been organized. Mr. Damian encouraged everyone to focus on thinking about health and healthy living.

Dr Hamda, from Dubai Health Authority during the event spoke about Dubai Smiles Healthy Award programme, which is a school based programme in line with Dubai's 2021 vision to improve oral health and decrease the level of caries among the students of Dubai. In her speech, Dr Hamda also explained to the children that "Live Mouth Smart" theme stands for brushing teeth twice a day, eating healthy, visiting dentist and dental hygienists regularly and to invest in a toothbrush which can remove up to ten times more plaque



From the left: Mr. Vincenzo Ventricelli, Vice President Philips Health and Wellness, Dr Hamda Sultan Al Mesmar, Director of Dental Services Department from Dubai Health Authority (DHA) and Damian Bavhoo, the Principal of GEMS Academy Silicon Oasis



Students of GEMS Academy Silicon Oasis during WOHD 2017

than a manual toothbrush. Additionally, all students were invited to participate in the Tooth Brushing Challenge and writing and drawing competitions.

After Dr Hamda's speech, Mr Ventricelli, Vice President Philips Health and Wellness explained the role of Philips in World Oral Health Day. Mr. Ventricelli mentioned that oral

hygiene is a global challenge and Philips is supporting this celebration to improve the lives of people worldwide. He said that for each challenge you need a solution, and the solution for oral health is involvement of the experts to provide materials and education on proper oral health.

It is important that oral health is taken care of from childhood to adult-

hood, prevention is easier and less painful than treatment. Therefore Philips Sonicare together with Dubai Health Authority (DHA), Dentist Direct and GEMS Wellington Academy Silicon Oasis organized several activities for the children to emphasize on proper tooth brushing and the importance of establishing daily good oral hygiene habits. [DT](#)

Interview: "Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease"

By Dental Tribune MEA / CAPPmea

Dental Tribune MEA / CAPP had the pleasure to interview Dr Shiamaa Shihab Ahmed Al Mashhadani from Dental Services Department at Dubai Health Authority (DHA) about World Oral Health Day 2017.

Dental Tribune MEA / CAPPmea: Could you please introduce yourself to our readers? Dr Shiamaa Al Mashhadani:

I have been working at DHA for the past 6 years. I was involved in the planning and implementation of the first oral health survey for the Emirate of Dubai. After establishing a baseline for the level of oral health in Dubai, the next step was to set up a preventive program that would help in improving the level of oral health among the population of Dubai. I am very passionate about enhancing the level of oral health, especially among the students of Dubai and my dream is a starting point to make Dubai the number one city in the region with caries-free students.

You have been working on the school prevention program

for already 4 years. Could you please tell us more about it and what exactly is the idea?

Oral health care is a critical component of good health. Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease: five times more common than asthma. Untreated tooth decay can lead to pain and suffering, affecting a child's ability to eat, speak, and focus at school, resulting in absenteeism and affecting the ability to learn and to develop physically and psychologically.

Dubai Smiles Healthy is the first national preventive and community-based program implemented in the Emirate of Dubai designed to improve the oral health of children in Dubai. It is adapted from the Childsmile program of NHS Scotland and follows the World Health Organization recommendations for preventive care.

It was based on the screening program conducted in 2013 in Dubai. "Dubai Smiles Healthy" (DSH) includes national and international requirements for better preventive care and overall wellbeing and happiness of the community and serves

the Dubai Health Authority's vision to have a healthy and happy community.

It has three main components: **Dubai Smiles Healthy - School Practice Program**

Preschools and Schools provide an important base to promote oral health as they reach large numbers of students who pass on these messages to their families. Schools can make a substantial contribution to a student's health and well-being. This has been increasingly recognised by many international initiatives including those from the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF and UNESCO. This means that the oral health messages reinforced in schools will eventually reach the whole community. The early years of a child's life is the most influential time to reinforce habits and attitudes, therefore targeting the students at this age with proper oral health habits will have a lifelong effect. They will be healthier and more productive individuals in their community, having better quality of life with a potential to long term cost saving.

Implementation of the school dental preventive visits

- Mobile dental vans visit the schools according to a schedule during the school calendar year, to carry out dental screening.
- School oral health screenings provide parents with information about their children's oral health and the importance of regular dental treatment.
- School screening data identifies areas with high levels of dental disease. Preventive interventions can be implemented in these targeted areas to improve the oral health of Dubai school children.

Dubai Smiles Health - School Nurse Training Program

The school nurse training program is

a national initiative of Dubai Smiles Healthy preventive program. It aims at creating a school nurse workforce with the competencies to prioritise oral disease prevention and oral health promotion. The overarching goal of this training is to create an oral health educational infrastructure for the school nursing profession that empowers the nurses in reducing oral diseases across Dubai schools.

Dubai Smiles Healthy - Child Health Program

Dental hygienists lead these sessions after they undergo proper training and educational sessions. There are set guidelines that the hygienists must follow to have a unified message sent to the public.

Parent education on proper oral health is the essence of the sessions. They attend with their children from the age of 6-8 weeks. Education on how to care for oral health, healthy diets and lifestyle are all part of this step. From six months of age, dental hygienists provide regular checkups and fluoride application for these children. The role of the hygienist includes: oral health advice (e.g. oral habits, diet, etc.), tooth brushing instructions and regular dental checkups from the age of 18 months.

What was the focus of celebrating WOHD on 20th of March at GEMS Wellington College?

In line with this year's World Oral Health Day theme: "Live Mouth Smart" Live Mouth Smart speaks to you about the decisions you can take to safeguard your own and your family's oral health so you can enjoy a healthy mouth throughout life. It is time to acknowledge that the mouth plays a vital role for our physical and psychological health and how Dubai Smiles Healthy can reinforce and enhance the level of oral health

and raise the awareness of the importance of maintaining good oral hygiene.

The focus this year was to emphasize on the link between general health and oral health, Can you tell us what is the Dubai Smiles Healthy Award about?

The Dubai Smiles Healthy Award was set up to achieve Dubai Health Authority's (DHA) 2021 strategy to raise awareness of oral health, prevention and screening in line with the goal of the DHA Dental Services Department to reduce caries and improve general oral health levels amongst students in Dubai.

As part of the program, the DHA, in cooperation with the private sector, will visit schools to carry out dental checks on students. The purpose of the screening, which will be done at the beginning and after the Dubai Smiles Healthy Brushing Challenge finishes, is to determine if the oral hygiene level has improved.

Do you think there is enough awareness among students in Dubai on oral health, or overall well-being?

No, we are just starting our first steps, a recent pilot questionnaire answered by 580 mothers asking about their knowledge of oral hygiene showed that 67% of their children were not consistent in brushing their teeth. We must reinforce good oral health habits, emphasising tooth brushing and a proper healthy diet. Homes, schools and the public media should work hand in hand to help raise the awareness to eliminate this silent epidemic. [DT](#)



Students of GEMS Academy Silicon Oasis during WOHD 2017