



Working with children and families

Community dental work

Pam

As a community dental nurse, part of Julie Lyon's job is to carry out health promotion and education among young children. Here is an extract of her talking to and working with a group of primary school children.

Julie Lyon

Now somebody said, you need to brush your teeth, and somebody said, you need to look after them to do with what you're eating. Right now I've got a picture here, that shows you what can go wrong, if you eat lots of foods. Now, it's a particular type of food, now I want your answers, what food do you think it might be? Yes.

Child

Sweets

Julie Lyon

Sorry, it could be sweets. Hands up who likes sweets. Right, hands down. What else could it be? Cola, well done it is, Coca-Cola, and I'll show you what damage Coca-Cola can do to your teeth. Anything else?

Child

Fizzy drinks.

Julie Lyon

Fizzy drinks that's right, fizzy drinks are really bad for your teeth. Yes.

Child

Sugar.

Julie Lyon

Sugar, right. Anything that contains sugar is going to damage your teeth, and the reason for it is because the sugar mixes with something in our mouth that grows in our mouths, what do you think it might be that grows in our mouths that might make our teeth go bad? And I've got a photograph of it.

Child

Acid or bacteria.

Julie Lyon

It's bacteria that makes the acid, okay? Now, there's a special name for the bacteria in our mouths, does anyone know what it might be? It begins with P. You might have heard it on the toothpaste adverts. Yes?

Child

Plaque.

Julie Lyon

It's plaque well done, well done. It's plaque or plaque, okay. and this is a picture of somebody that doesn't brush their teeth for seven days. This is a tooth, and this sticky substance on the tooth is plaque, it's germs, bacteria, it's a layer of germs that grows in the mouth. Now my little

boy, he didn't brush his teeth or gums for two days, if I show you this picture, can you see that yellowy sticky stuff in between the teeth, can you all see that?

Children

Ewwww.

Julie Lyon

Now that's germs okay. So what I'm going to show you now is how you can brush your teeth at home, and how you can show mummies daddies whoever looks after you at home, how you can brush as well, to get rid of all those germs. When you have your sweets at home, how many of you have a special sweetie day, that you can have your sweets. Right so, I'll ask your name, your name.

Child

Charlie Anne.

Julie Lyon

Charlie Anne, you can have a sweet today and your name?

Child

Nathan.

Julie Lyon

Nathan, do you have a sweetie day, when what day is your sweetie day?

Child

Erm, well I've got two, Saturday and Sunday.

Julie Lyon

Oh right Saturday and Sunday. But when is it safe on that Saturday and Sunday now for you to have those sweets, what part of the day?

Child

Erm after dinner.

Julie Lyon

Right, so even though you've got a sweetie day then, Saturday and Sunday, after lunch and after tea will be the safest times. When's your special sweetie day?

Child

Saturday!

Julie Lyon

Saturday right.

Child

After dinner.

Julie Lyon

After dinners. Right anyone else have a special sweetie day? When's your special sweetie day?

Child

Erm Friday.

Julie Lyon

Fridays right, and when do you eat your sweets?

Child

Erm, just after I come in from school.

Julie Lyon

Right could you change that now to just after you have your tea?

Child

Because my mum says, you've got to eat them now because I'm making your dinner.

Julie Lyon

Right well if you say to mum, it might be safer for your teeth if you have them when, straight after your dinner as a special treat, okay? And not eat them in, on the way home from school when they, your teeth might go bad, okay, do you think you can tell her that? She might not know, so you might be able to tell her. Pay attention again.

Julie Lyon

James.

Julie Lyon

Hands up who eat fruit every single day, right what sort of fruit do you eat.

Child

Apples.

Julie Lyon

Right what do you have?

Child

Apples, oranges.

Julie Lyon

Apples and oranges and what do you have.

Child

Apples, bananas.

Julie Lyon

Apple and bananas, what do you have.

Child

Every day on the way to school In the car I have an apple.

Julie Lyon

That's very good. Yes.

Child

Grapes.

Julie Lyon

You have some grapes, right.

Child

Cherries.

Julie Lyon

Cherries, yes I love cherries, who likes cherries. Oh right how many of you eat cherries? Right, what's another one that grows, on a plant on the floor and you can pick them, you might be able to pick your own.

Child

Strawberries.

Julie Lyon

Strawberries, that's right.

Child

I've got loads of strawberry plants.

Child

Every day except for my sweetie day.

Julie Lyon

Oh right you don't have a fruit on your sweetie day?

Child

No because I don't want to spoil it.

Julie Lyon

Oh right don't want to spoil your sweets or your fruit.

Child

Don't want to spoil my sweetie day.

Julie Lyon

Oh right, well you, well you could have one afterwards it wouldn't hurt, wouldn't spoil it. So how are you going to look after your gums, now what are you going to do?

Child

I've learnt about why you have to like wash your gums.

Julie Lyon

That's right you've learnt why you have to brush your gums, so that, you don't have false teeth when you become an adult, you want to have your own teeth, so you've got to learn to brush away all those germs, that's right. Anybody else, what have they learnt today?
Yes.

Child

I learnt that erm, that I don't have many sweets anyway, so I don't have to bother about it.

Julie Lyon

Right you don't have to worry about sweets, but when you do have when are you going to eat them?

Child

After tea.

Julie Lyon

After tea, after meals. And what have you learnt today?

Child

I've learnt today, brush your teeth every night and day morning.

Julie Lyon

And brush your teeth and brush your...?

Child

Gums.

Julie Lyon

Gums as well, right, yes.

Child

Don't don't start leaving your teeth and thinking that that it's all right to not brush your teeth every morning.

Julie Lyon

That's right, that's a very good good answer. So remember that you're not to leave them, you must brush them every single day so that you've got nice smiley faces.

Child

Don't drink sugar drinks.

Julie Lyon

That's right, when you don't drink them, or when should you drink them if you are going to drink them? When's a safe... because one thing I haven't shown you, you've just reminded me, are what, I said I was going to show you the damage that diet drinks can do. Don't worry about the gap in between your teeth, what's happened to the edges of those teeth?

Child

They're see-through.

Julie Lyon

They are see through that's right, they've become transparent, like a window, and what these teeth will do is break up and go all crumbly. The fizzy drinks that are very acidic, and very strong that actually will do this to your teeth, so that's why it's important not to drink too much bubbly drink, anything that's got a bubble in it, carbonated drink, will damage your teeth if you drink a lot of it, and dentists are seeing a lot of 'tooth erosion' this is called, but you'll learn that when you go into the next school.

Child

I have strawberryade.

Julie Lyon

Do you, well drink that with meal, because that's very acidic as well, strawberryade. So drink it after tea or after lunch.

Child

It's only 23p.