

# An important message for Essex schools from our Public Health and Healthy Schools Team

**Subject: Oral Health, Sun Safety and Skin Cancer**

**Date: May 2020**

**Issue: No. 16**

**National Smile Month** is an annual awareness campaign that takes place between 18<sup>th</sup> May and 18<sup>th</sup> June. This campaign is dedicated to raising awareness of the issues around oral health and the importance of oral hygiene so that we can all work together to achieve healthier mouths and happier lives.

**Sun Awareness Week** this year is from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> of May and the aim of this week is to raise awareness for the dangers of long exposure to the sun, and to promote safety when outside.

**Skin Cancer Awareness Month** is an annual awareness campaign that takes place every May. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the dangers of unprotected sun exposure and educate the public about the ways to help prevent skin cancer.

For latest updates on Coronavirus (COVID-19) please click [here](#)

## Your pupils' wellbeing – primary and secondary

### Oral Health

PSHE Association members can access [home learning lessons on keeping teeth healthy](#) for Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 to share with their pupils.

Also take a look at the fantastic free [Dental Buddy resources](#) for Early Years Education, Key Stage 1 and 2.

Public Health England recommend this new [Children's Oral Health e-learning programme](#) as a source of information and advice to teachers and parents.

### Sun Awareness and Skin Cancer

The website Twinkl have lots of colourful and interactive [sun safety resources](#) that pupils can access for free from their website during sun awareness week.

Older pupils can use the accurate information on the NHS website to bust all of the [sun safety myths](#) there are, including that a tan does not protect your skin from the sun's harmful effects.

## Staff wellbeing

When we are busy taking care of others we can sometimes forget to give any attention to our own wellbeing, please take a look at these useful reminders and links to help you.

### Oral Health

If you are short on time listen to a [podcast on oral health](#) whilst you prepare a meal, or even clean your teeth. Topics include: healthy gums, diet and my teeth and dental erosion.

### Sun Awareness and Skin Cancer

There is so much information available to us via the internet that it can be confusing what advice to follow. For [sunscreen and sun safety tips](#) we recommend the NHS website, the advice includes:

- Wear at least factor 30 sunscreen, apply it 30 minutes before going out and reapply it every two hours
- Avoid getting sunburnt
- Wear a broad brimmed hat and UV blocking sunglasses.
- Check your body for unusual skin changes/moles

## Family Wellbeing *Information for parents/carers to be disseminated via your newsletters/parent mail*

### Oral Health

Encouraging your child to brush their teeth can be difficult and at the moment your child's normal routine has changed quite a lot. To help your child clean their teeth every morning and evening try using Home Starts [creating a family routine during self-isolation](#) template.

You can also take a look at the very helpful [Brush DJ app](#) that plays 2 minutes of music whilst your child brushes their teeth and a useful 'buzz' every 30 seconds to remind them to change sides.

A simple way to help you keep your child's teeth healthy is to reduce the amount of sugary foods and drinks they have. The Change 4 Life website has some great [sugar swap ideas](#).

### Sun Awareness

Our top tip is to remember to add sunscreen to your weekly shop.

There is so much information available to us via the internet and social media that it can be confusing what advice to follow. For [sunscreen and sun safety tips](#) for you and your child we recommend the NHS website, the advice suggests: wear at least factor 30 sunscreen, apply it 30 minutes before going out and reapply it every two hours.

Also drink lots of fluids to avoid becoming dehydrated. You could try making homemade lollies made from very diluted fruit juice, or eat food with high water content such as watermelons for snacks.

In this lovely warm weather please always remember to stay with your child if they are using a paddling pool in the garden. To keep your [child safe around ponds](#) follow the charity RoSPA's advice of choosing either:

1. Grill it – cover the pond with a rigid metal grille
2. Fence it – make sure it is at least 1.1m high and gates are kept locked
3. Fill it – transform your pond into something else like a sandpit whilst your children are young.

For further advice and guidance during this challenging time, please visit our [Covid-19 Pandemic Resource Hub](#).

# References

Please use these references to further your reading and find out more information.

1. Oral Health Foundation (2020). National Smile Month. Available at: <https://www.dentalhealth.org/what-is-national-smile-month>
2. British Association of Dermatologists (2020). Sun Awareness Week. Available at: <https://www.skinhealthinfo.org.uk/sun-awareness/>
3. Skin Cancer Awareness Month (2020). May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month. Available at: <https://www.skincancer.org/get-involved/skin-cancer-awareness-month/>
4. Gov.uk (2020). Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>
5. PSHE Association (2020). Dental Health – home learning lessons on keeping teeth healthy. Available at: <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/dental-health-%E2%80%94-home-learning-lessons-keeping>
6. Oral Health Foundation (2020). Dental Buddy. Available at: <https://www.dentalhealth.org/dentalbuddy>
7. NHS Health Education England (2020). Children’s Oral Health Advice. Available at: <https://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/Component/Details/556108>
8. Twinkl (2020). National Sun Awareness Week. Available at: <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/event/national-sun-awareness-week-2020>
9. NHS (2019). Sunscreen and Sun Safety. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>
10. Oral Health Foundation (2020). The Oral Health Podcast. Available at: <https://www.dentalhealth.org/oralhealthpodcast>
11. Home Start (2020). Creating a family routine during self-isolation. Available at: <https://www.home-start.org.uk/adding-routine-to-life-at-home>
12. NHS (2018). Brush DJ. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/brush-dj/>
13. Change 4 Life (2020). Sugar swaps for kids. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/food-facts/sugar/sugar-swaps-for-kids#make-a-swap>
14. RoSPA (2019). Garden ponds. Available at: <https://www.rospa.com/leisure-safety/Water/Advice/Pond-Garden-Water.aspx>
15. Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (2020). COVID-19 Resource Hub. Available at: <https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/covid-19-pandemic-resource-hub/>

To find out more information about us and the wide range of services we offer, please visit [www.essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk](http://www.essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk)



We are always looking for ways to improve and provide you with information that is beneficial and relevant to you. We value your opinion and would love to hear your feedback on our briefings. Please send your reply to [Essex.Communications@virginicare.co.uk](mailto:Essex.Communications@virginicare.co.uk)