

HKU Faculty of Dentistry helps in international campaign to improve preschoolers' oral health

[Dr Chun-hung Chu](#) (Clinical Associate Professor in Community and Family Dentistry) is representing the HKU Faculty of Dentistry to coordinate the Hong Kong section of an international educational campaign organised by Colgate-Palmolive Company to improve oral health in kindergartens, the company announced at the FDI 2012 Annual World Dental Congress in Hong Kong, on 29 August.

Under Colgate's worldwide "Bright Smiles, Bright Futures" scheme and supported by a grant of HK\$220,000 and health education materials, the Hong Kong campaign aims to reach more than 10,000 children in local kindergartens, starting from September 2012. The 2-year programme will target 100 kindergartens per year to promote good oral health practices for a lifetime, by directly educating children and parents, as well as providing training for kindergarten teachers to deliver oral health messages.

The oral health outreach programme is an extension of a 2-year initial campaign that has just finished in Hong Kong, also sponsored by Colgate-Palmolive and implemented by Dr CH Chu. That scheme reached nearly 11,000 kindergarten children and was well received by teachers who were surveyed afterwards.

"During the 2010-12 programme, we found that about 40% of the children had tooth decay, and most cases had been left untreated," says Dr CH Chu. "However, tooth decay is preventable with good oral health practices, including brushing at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and flossing daily. As preschool children may not be able to fully grasp brushing skills, our workshops will help prevent cavities by giving children proper training and getting parents to help with re-brushing."

Developed with an advisory board of educational, dental, and multicultural experts, and tested with children and teachers in real classrooms, Colgate's "Bright Smiles, Bright Futures" has offered free dental screenings and oral health education to more than 650 million children and their families across 80 countries since 1991, according to Colgate's "Bright Smiles, Bright Futures" website (<http://www.colgate.com/app/BrightSmilesBrightFutures/US/EN/HomePage.cvsp>).

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