



Community Engagement

HKU Faculty of Dentistry helps to break poor oral habits among preschoolers

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A team from the HKU Faculty of Dentistry is helping to promote optimal oral health and development in young children by encouraging healthy oral habits and stopping unhealthy ones.

Supported by a grant from the HKSAR Food and Health Bureau's Health Care and Promotion Fund, the project "Terminating poor oral habits of preschool-aged children" was started in 2012 by project leader Dr Yanqi Yang (Clinical Assistant Professor in Orthodontics) and will last until 2014. The other main team member is Dr Chun-hung Chu (Clinical Associate Professor in Community and Family Dentistry).



With the help of the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children, the team aims to teach preschoolers' parents and teachers about the importance of early intervention so as to prevent misaligned teeth and jaws later in life. Through workshops, dental examinations, and small-group discussions at local kindergartens, the team will help break bad oral habits such as thumb and dummy/pacifier sucking and bed-time bottle-feeding. The long-term goal is to prevent adverse effects on appearance, eating, and speaking, and for the kindergarten teachers to teach future children and their parents about good and bad oral habits.

This project is part of a larger campaign to improve oral health and development of 0- to 6-year-olds in Hong Kong, for which Dr Yang and her team won the HKU Faculty of Dentistry Knowledge Exchange Award 2013. Educational material and details about this and the other two component projects ("On becoming babywise" and "Oral health for antenatal women") of the winning campaign can be found at the Faculty's Community Projects blogsite, <http://tiny.cc/30jerw>.

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Knowledge exchange (KE) at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry (<http://facdent.hku.hk>) aims to maintain a two-way dialogue between the Faculty and all sectors of the community. The Faculty's KE strategy, public education, and community activities form part of the Faculty's fourth mission of "engagement". We will be pleased to consider any suggestions or comments, or community/school invitations; please e-mail dentke@hku.hk

