



06 AUG, 2026

Young people the focus of 2026 Dental Health Week

Dubbo Photo News, Dubbo

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By SHARON BONTHUYS

IT'S Dental Health Week (August 3-9) and the oral health of young Australians is the focus of this year's awareness activities by leading dental authorities.

The Australian Dental Association's (ADA) "My Smile" campaign focuses on young people aged 18-25 years.

"This stage of life is full of change, with young Aussies moving out, studying or starting a job, learning to budget and taking care of their own health," the ADA's website says.

"Many young adults put off going to the dentist until something is seriously wrong.

"Gen Z also gets health information differently from older generations, often turning to the internet or influencers ahead of qualified professionals.

"This year's campaign [stresses] the importance of seeing a dentist before small issues turn into big problems," the ADA says.

Families of rural, regional and remote preschool children will also be interested to learn about the launch of a premium digital streaming platform dedicated to children's oral health.

"Tooth Tales On Demand" has

been created by dentist and educator Dr Bethany Fisher to address the disparity in oral health outcomes between city and country kids.

Children in regional and rural areas are more likely to experience poorer oral health including higher rates of tooth decay, Dr Fisher says, and government data suggests they also face reduced access to fluoridated drinking water, preventative dental visits and effective oral health education.

"Every year I bring my Tooth Tales live shows to up to 10,000 kids across metro areas, but I didn't want rural and regional kids to miss out just because of where they live," Dr Bethany said.

"I can [now] bring the same education and energy to preschools, kindies and family day cares no matter how far they are from a major city."

Drawing on Dr Bethany's musical background, the program combines hands-on activities such as science experiments, arts and crafts and play based literacy and numeracy tasks, alongside guided educator resources including activity plans, discussion prompts

and topic summaries.

The platform features catchy songs, movement and story-based entertainment, while parent resource packs let children continue the learning at home.

With Dental Health Week providing a timely reminder of the importance of good oral hygiene, Dr Bethany said, focusing on a few key fundamentals can dramatically improve young children's oral health outcomes.

- Brush twice daily for two minutes
- Use gentle circular motions, cleaning every surface of each tooth
- Lead brushing until around age six, with supervision continuing through to eight or nine
- Prioritise brushing before bed to remove food and plaque overnight
- Spit, don't rinse, after brushing to maximise fluoride protection.

Further information about the Tooth Tales program can be obtained from drbethanystoothtales.com.



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Dr Bethany Fisher has created a streaming platform to help rural, regional and remote children improve their oral health and education. PHOTO: TOOTH TALES