

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Polish Your Pearls Returns to Southwest Nebraska

Polish your Pearls is making a comeback for Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department after being put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This program supplements regular dental visits to provide optimal protection against cavities. This program is available to local daycares and preschools to provide oral health screening, education, and application of fluoride varnish to children aged 0-5.

In the month of June SWNPHD along with dental hygienist, Katie Vaughn, was able to provide 22 kids with dental screenings and fluoride application at BlessEng's Childcare in McCook, owned by Chelsey Eng.

"Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood illness in the United States according to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD), and the most preventable of all health problems," states Amanda Ebert, Program Manager for SWNPHD. "It is 5 times more common than asthma and 20 times more common than diabetes. In Nebraska 46% of children aged 3-5 already have dental decay, and rates are even higher for rural, low income, minority, and special needs children."

It is now recommended by AAPD that children visit their dentist no later than their first birthday.

Proper Brushing

- Tilt your toothbrush and put the bristles next to your gum line. The bristles should touch both the tooth and the gum line.
- Use a gentle vibrating movement to brush the outside surfaces of 2-3 teeth at a time. Be sure to brush both sides of the teeth.
- Tilt toothbrush up and down behind the front teeth. Make up and down strokes using the bristle side of the brush.
- Brush the tongue from back to front to get rid of odor-producing bacteria.

Having your child participate in the Polish Your Pearls dental program can save money and help prevent problems. The fluoride varnish applied is a sticky, honey like material that is applied to the teeth with a small soft brush. This varnish can be applied 4-6 times per year and can decrease further cavity development by approximately 38%. All children who participate in the program will receive a free dental screening, toothbrush, and toothpaste. A note is also sent home with your child, showing the screening results. Those interested in knowing more about the program or wanting to set up a dental clinic should contact Amanda Ebert at SWNPHD at 308-345-4223.

SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th Street – one block north of Arby’s in McCook. You can also follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties.

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Picture 1

Dental Hygienist-Katie Vaughn applying fluoride to Asher Manley aka Rooster while his sister Aurora Manley patiently waits her turn. On the right is Sarah Minnick, Program Assistant with SWNPHD and her helper Hadley Ebert, getting kids lined up for their turn.