

# Ed's letter



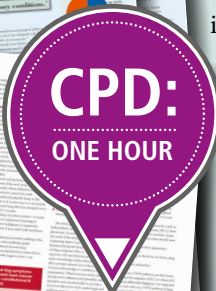
Having two young children is an oral health minefield. My youngest started school in the autumn and her attendance at breakfast club revealed that bowls of cereal are automatically topped with honey squirted from a large bottle. My 'LO' is delighted if boxes of raisins are served during the free fruit break... and of course both children regularly emerge from school clutching a 'funsize' pack of chewy sweets, a lollipop or fizzy chew if someone in their class has a birthday. They've barely thrust the sticky treat into their mouths before they're rooting through my handbag, bleating for snacks. Then after dinner, son number one switches on the conveyor belt of chocolate still hanging around from the grandparents' Christmas gifts.

Fortunately, my kids have a mother who has had massive exposure to oral health advice due to my job. I may not be able to cut out (much) sugar, but I'm regimented when it comes to tooth brushing and will never be persuaded to buy a seven-year-old a 500 ml bottle of full sugar blackcurrant drink at the park cafe.

Many other children do not have the best start when it comes to oral health, and as all dental professionals know, early exposure to the dental environment is essential for establishing lifelong oral health. The Dental Check by One campaign is designed to have a positive, preventive impact on young infants and their caregivers *before* any issues occur. But how should dental professionals approach appointments with babies and toddlers? Dentist Jemma Hook offers comprehensive practical tips in this issue of *BDJ Team*.

In *They're not 'just baby teeth'* meanwhile, authors from the Royal London Dental Hospital look at the critical need to change society's views on primary teeth. With access to dentistry figures worse than ever post-pandemic, this could not be more important as we continue through the 2020s.

Elsewhere in the patient age demographic, this issue also looks at mouth care in hospitals, and much more. Read on!



Kate

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