

Celebrating WOHD 2024: Empowering young smiles with SADA

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Mr KC Makhubele – CEO, South African Dental Association

Introduction:

In our ongoing commitment to promoting oral health awareness and collaboration with stakeholders, the South African Dental Association (SADA) actively participated in the World Oral Health Day (WOHD) event jointly organized together with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) at Thusong Primary School in Kagiso, Johannesburg.

Engagement with Stakeholders:

We were privileged to join esteemed stakeholders including the MEC of the Department of Health, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko, and Mr KC Makhubele, CEO of SADA, along with representatives from various institutions such as Thusong Primary School, health and educational departments, oral health centres, and district services.

Impactful Interventions:

During the event, a pre-screening session identified 979 children, with 424 receiving referral letters for further attention. Grades 0-7 were targeted, and our dedicated teams provided essential services:

Oral Health Education: 517 children benefited from educational sessions conducted by SADA, Wits OHC, and SMU OHC. These sessions covered topics ranging from proper brushing techniques to the importance of regular dental check-ups, empowering children with the knowledge to maintain optimal oral health.

Oral Health Screening and Treatment: A total of 66 learners received screenings and treatment in mobile dental trucks. These screenings detected various oral health issues early, allowing for prompt intervention and treatment to prevent further complications.

Preventive Measures: Fissure sealants were applied to 8 children, providing a protective barrier against decay in vulnerable areas of their teeth. Additionally, 16 children

received tooth restoration services, restoring both functionality and aesthetics to their smiles.

Referral Services: 12 children were referred for specialized care, ensuring that those requiring further treatment beyond the scope of the event received the necessary attention from qualified dental professionals.

Commitment to Oral Health:

With over a billion South Africans affected by oral diseases annually, SADA remains steadfast in our mission to combat this escalating issue. Our involvement in initiatives like WOHD reflects our dedication to promoting oral health education and addressing the lack of awareness.

Empowering Future Generations:

At the heart of our efforts lies the belief that informed oral health practices lead to happier, healthier smiles, particularly among our youth—the future leaders and potentially future dentists. We are unwavering in our commitment to providing essential dental services and education to primary schools, ensuring a brighter, healthier future for all.

Continued Collaboration:

SADA reaffirms its pledge to collaborate with any partnership focused on dental education. As the voice of oral healthcare, we are dedicated to advocating for improved oral health outcomes and fostering a culture of preventive care. By working hand in hand with stakeholders across various sectors, we can amplify our impact and reach more communities in need.

Conclusion:

In celebrating WOHD 2024, SADA remains resolute in its commitment to empowering young smiles and working alongside stakeholders to promote oral health education and access to essential dental services. Together, we strive towards a future where every smile radiates with health and happiness, laying the foundation for generations to come to live their lives to the fullest with confident, healthy smiles.

