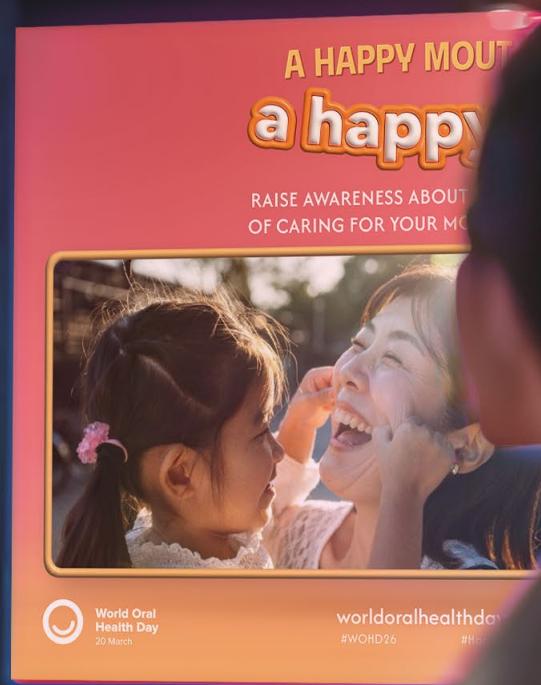


Production in partnership with



A HAPPY MOUTH IS... a happy life



GOVERNMENT BRIEFING



worldoralhealthday.org
#WOHD26

#HappyMouth



World Oral
Health Day
20 March

Watch on



GET READY FOR WORLD ORAL HEALTH DAY

EVERYONE DESERVES ACCESS TO QUALITY ORAL HEALTHCARE AND THE KNOWLEDGE TO PROTECT THEIR SMILE. EVERY YEAR ON 20 MARCH, THE WORLD UNITES TO SHINE A SPOTLIGHT ON THE VITAL ROLE ORAL HEALTH PLAYS IN OUR OVERALL WELL-BEING. TOGETHER, LET'S MAKE THIS GLOBAL MOVEMENT STRONGER.

World Oral Health Day (WOHD) is a powerful reminder: caring for our mouths is key to living a healthier, happier life. Poor oral health can lead to pain, discomfort, and a loss of confidence, and research continues to reveal just how closely our oral health is linked to general health. By taking action together, we can transform lives.

Here's how different groups can make an impact:

General public

WOHD encourages everyone to take charge of their oral health. By adopting healthy habits, and sharing them with family and friends, you can multiply the positive impact.

FDI members, dentists, dental and wider healthcare teams

As trusted healthcare providers, you are on the frontlines. WOHD is your chance to amplify the vital role you play in guiding people toward healthier choices.

Schools and youth groups

Schools shape lifelong habits. Teaching children about oral health lays the foundation for healthier futures. Prevention truly begins here.

Companies and community groups

Promoting oral health in workplaces and communities not only supports well-being but also enhances confidence and productivity.

Public health advocacy groups

Advocacy drives change. WOHD is a platform to push for health equity and policies that expand access to essential oral healthcare.

Governments and policymakers

Strong policies and services are critical to raising awareness and improving access. Governments play a leading role in ensuring oral health for all.

**THIS TOOLKIT IS HERE TO INSPIRE AND EQUIP YOU.
LET'S MAKE EVERY SMILE A HEALTHIER, HAPPIER ONE.**

WOHD is an initiative of FDI World Dental Federation.

CAMPAIGN THEME

A HAPPY MOUTH IS... a happy life

Since launching our three-year campaign theme, A Happy Mouth is..., in 2024, we've continued to celebrate the power of a smile and the vital role oral health plays in living well. Each year, the campaign shines a light on a different aspect of oral health—reflecting global health priorities and uniting people everywhere in the shared mission to make oral health a lifelong priority.

- 2024: Celebrated how good oral health supports a healthy body and overall well-being.
- 2025: Explored the powerful link between oral health and mental well-being.
- **2026: Shines a spotlight on the importance of caring for your mouth at every stage of life—from birth through later years.**

Every day, our mouths help us connect, express, and enjoy life's simplest joys. From sharing a meal to chatting with friends or laughing with loved ones, a healthy mouth makes every moment brighter.

So, let's keep the momentum going! Join us once again in spreading healthy habits and encouraging great oral care at every stage of life—because when your mouth is happy, life truly is too.

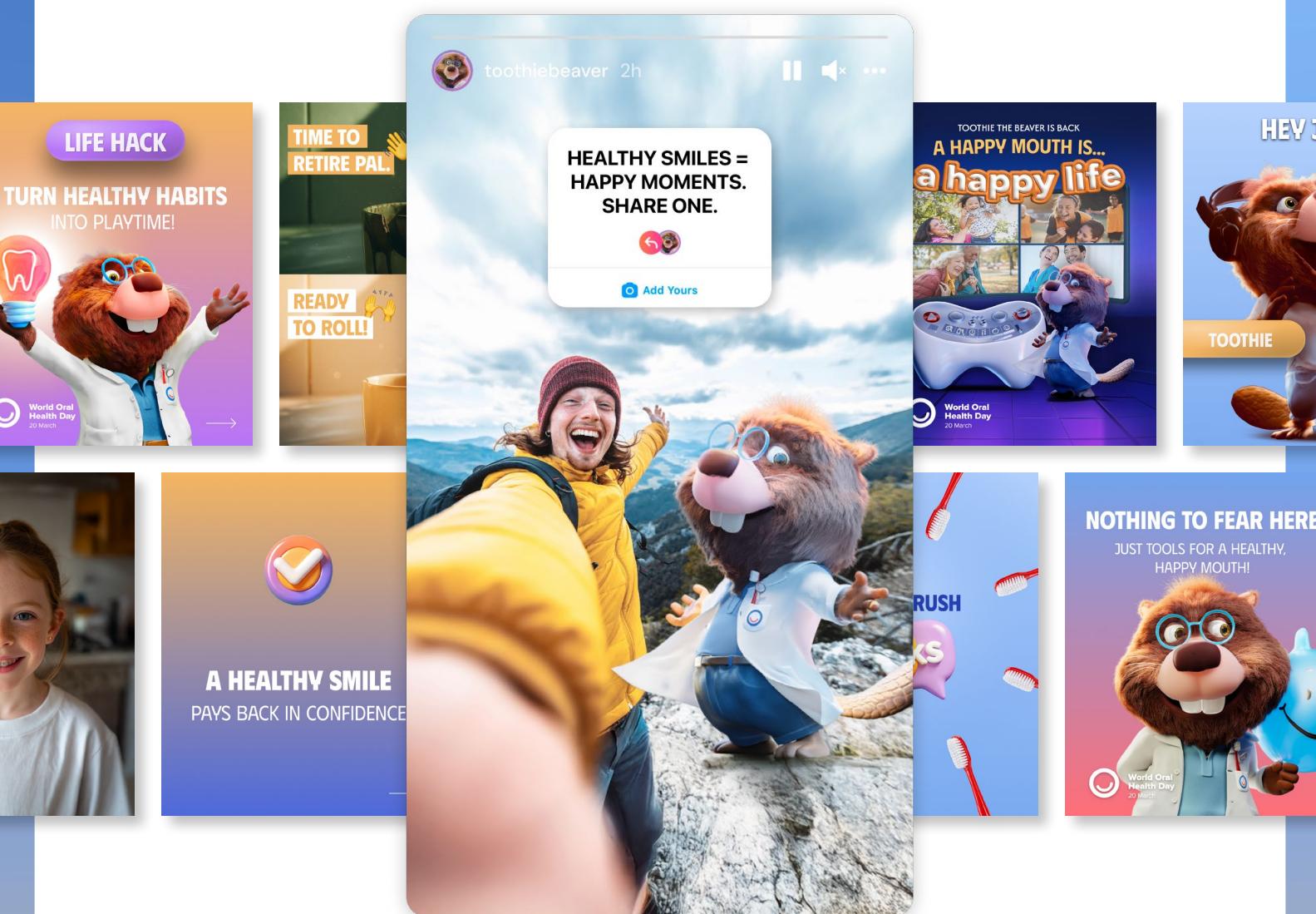
A HAPPY MOUTH FINALE WITH TOOTHIE

In 2026, Toothie, our World Oral Health Day influencer and advocate, is back in the spotlight to lead the finale of the Happy Mouth campaign. And what better way to close this chapter, before leaping into the next, than by celebrating every life—young and old—because feeling your best starts with a healthy smile, every day, at every age.

This year, Toothie has composed a brand-new song, recruited exciting new talent to perform it, and brought together friends from every generation—Lin, Julia, Ethan, and Olu—to help spread the joy of good oral health throughout life.

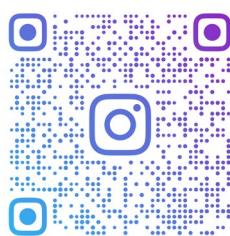
So, get ready to celebrate the finale in style and help inspire people everywhere to celebrate a **healthier, happier life with us!**

FOLLOW TOOTHIE'S HAPPY MOMENTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND ADD YOURS!



If you're not already following Toothie on Instagram, now is the perfect time: [@toothiebeaver](https://www.instagram.com/toothiebeaver). He'll keep you updated whenever exciting new content or announcements are coming your way! As an experienced influencer, Toothie will also take over FDI's [@worldoralhealthday](https://www.instagram.com/worldoralhealthday) Instagram

channel during the campaign to spark global engagement and participation. But that's not all. You also have the chance to be part of a record-breaking chain of happy moments! Don't miss out — more details on page 22.



ARE YOU READY?

#WOHD26
#HAPPYMOOUTH

KEY CAMPAIGN MESSAGES

Every stage of life is brighter with a healthy smile, as it is strongly connected to overall well-being.

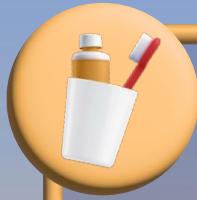
By building strong daily habits and caring for our mouths, we give ourselves the confidence to laugh, connect, and thrive—because a happy mouth makes for a happy life. And oral health doesn't stand alone: it's closely linked with other major non-communicable diseases (NCDs), sharing many of the same modifiable risk factors, including tobacco and alcohol use, an unhealthy diet high in free sugars, and poor oral hygiene. Managing these factors throughout life is essential to protecting not just your smile, but your whole body and mind.



ORAL HEALTH FOR BABIES AND TODDLERS

A baby's mouth is where smiles, giggles, and first words begin. Keeping it healthy helps them grow, connect and explore the world with joy.

- **Gently wipe** your baby's gums after each feed using a clean, moist gauze pad or soft cloth.
- Use bottles only for breast milk, formula, milk, or water—**never sugary drinks**, including sweetened milk or water.
- **Discourage** thumb sucking, pacifier use, and sippy cups to protect oral development.
- **Avoid** putting your baby to bed with a bottle, as it can harm their teeth and gums.
- **Begin** regular dental visits as soon as the first tooth appears.
- **Brush** for two minutes, twice a day, using a smear of fluoride toothpaste (about the size of a grain of rice). Make sure one of those brushings is before bedtime.



ORAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS

Strong healthy teeth help children and teens eat well, speak clearly, discover new tastes, and shine with confidence as they grow.

- **Reinforce** good oral health habits every day.
- **Supervise** toothbrushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste until your child can brush properly on their own. Brushing before bedtime is especially important. Make sure children aged 3–6 use only a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.
- **Make sure** they clean between their teeth at least once a day using floss or interdental brushes, or as recommended by their dentist.
- **Visit** the dentist regularly to monitor tooth growth and alignment.
- **Encourage** healthy foods and limit sugary snack and drinks, especially in-between meals.
- **Ensure** that a properly fitted mouthguard is worn during contact sports and cycling.



ORAL HEALTH FOR ADULTS

Your smile is a part of who you are. A healthy mouth supports your whole body and makes everyday moments brighter whether sharing a meal, chatting with a friend, or laughing with loved ones.

- **Maintain** good oral hygiene and visit the dentist regularly. Regular check-ups allow dentists to detect and treat problems early.
- **Protect** your smile by avoiding tobacco, limiting alcohol, reducing sugar, and following a healthy lifestyle.
- **Eat** well-balanced meals and replace sugary drinks with water. Frequent consumption of sugar throughout the day increases the risk of tooth decay.
- **Wear** a properly fitted mouthguard during contact sports and cycling.
- **Take extra care** when pregnant, as hormonal changes can affect oral health. It is important to schedule a dental check-up during pregnancy.



ORAL HEALTH FOR SENIORS

Healthy teeth and gums help you stay well, enjoy the foods you love, and keep your independence so you can live life to the fullest, with a smile.

- **Preventive care** is key to ageing well.
- **Learn** about oral health risks that come with ageing, such as dry mouth, and take steps to prevent them. Be aware that some medications and systemic conditions can also affect the mouth – discuss any changes with your dentist or doctor.
- **Good** oral hygiene, adequate nutrition, and regular visits to your dentist will help you:
 - avoid pain and infections;
 - avoid falls;
 - enjoy healthy and diverse foods;
 - avoid dry mouth.



SUMMARY OF KEY ORAL HEALTH TIPS FOR EVERYONE

A healthy smile makes life better! Brush for two minutes, twice a day, with fluoride toothpaste, visit your dentist regularly, and cut back on sugary foods and drinks — no matter your age. For the best health benefits, try to keep “free sugars” (the ones added to foods and drinks) to less than 10% of your daily energy intake — and under 5% if possible.

Schedule dental check-ups based on your personal needs, and ask your dentist how often you should be seen.

ORAL HEALTH IS A RIGHT NOT A PRIVILEGE

Major inequalities in oral health exist, both within and between countries, and although oral diseases are largely preventable the global burden remains unacceptably high.

The poor and disadvantaged in society suffer a disproportionately high level of disease, effective population-wide disease prevention remains to be implemented, and affordable, appropriate care is not accessible to all.

WOHD is an opportunity to persuade our governments to do more. Countries at all income levels can take steps towards achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by developing their own basic packages that integrate oral healthcare.

Use the **FDI Vision 2030 – Implementation Toolkit** for more tools and resources to support your national advocacy efforts.



**TOGETHER, WE MUST WORK TIRELESSLY TO ELIMINATE
THE DISPARITIES SO THAT BY 2030, ORAL HEALTH
IS A RIGHT ACCESSIBLE TO ALL.**



CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

USE THE CAMPAIGN MATERIALS
TO RUN YOUR OWN WOHD ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS.

Everything is free to download and available in English, French and Spanish.
New resources are added throughout the campaign; check the website regularly
and share the materials as widely as you can.

worldoralhealthday.org/resources



OVERVIEW OF CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

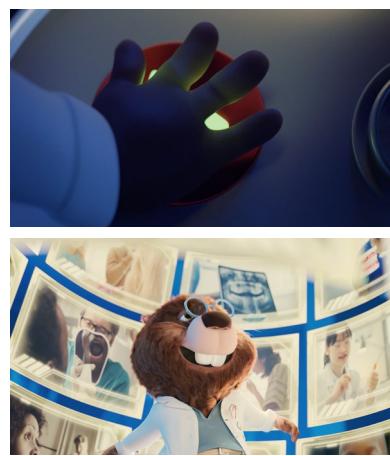
CAMPAIGN POSTERS



ADVOCACY IN ACTION CARDS



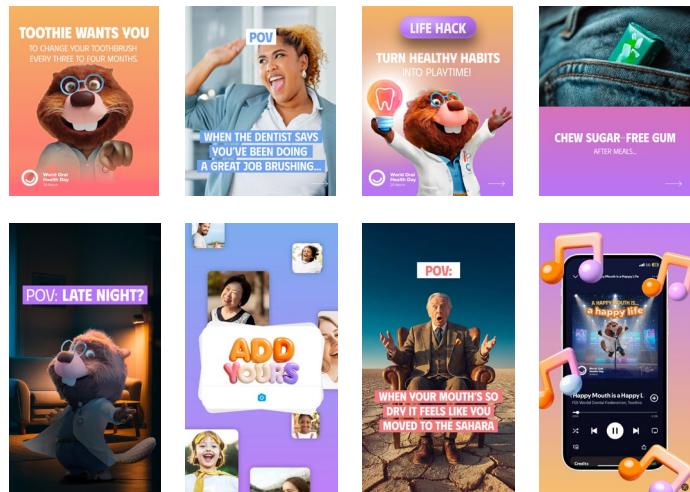
CAMPAIGN VIDEOS



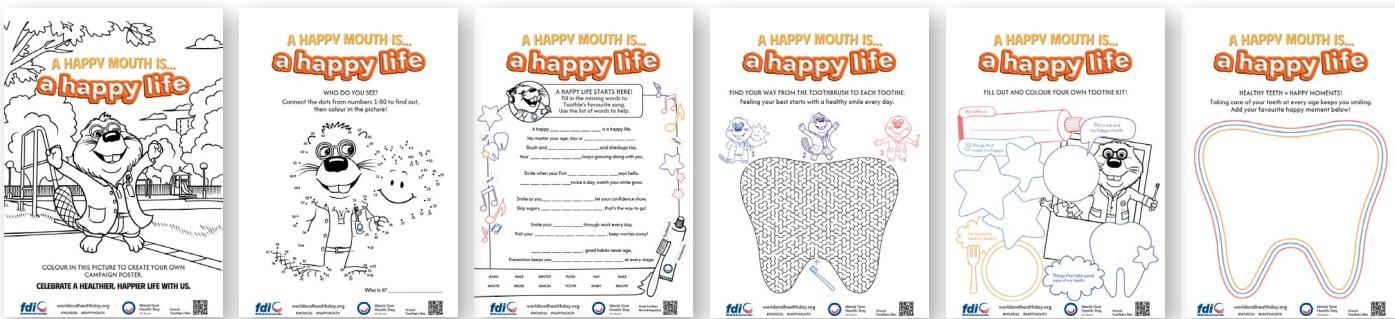
ORAL HEALTH INFORMATION



DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA



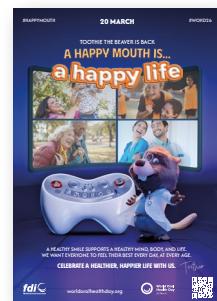
CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY SHEETS



TEACHING RESOURCES



MEDIA ASSETS



MULTILINGUAL WOHD LOGO



GOVERNMENTS AND POLICYMAKERS

INTEGRATE ORAL DISEASES INTO POLICIES ADDRESSING NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDs) AND UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE (UHC)

Oral health is a key indicator of general health, well-being and quality of life. Governments recognized the importance of addressing oral health at the Fourth United Nations High-Level Meeting on the prevention and control of NCDs and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing. Oral health must be prioritized within national NCD and UHC policies rooted in integrated health systems and backed with adequate financial and human resource allocation. Governments should ensure the implementation of the 2023 World Health Organization (WHO) **Global Oral Health Action Plan** to address the associations between oral health, NCDs, and well-being.

PRIORITIZE SURVEILLANCE, MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF ORAL DISEASES

Standardizing and integrating oral health indicators within national health information systems is a crucial step to inform national oral health action plans and ensure evidence-based policy making.

Governments should leverage the WHO **Global Oral Health Action Plan** monitoring framework, with its 11 core indicators (for global monitoring and reporting) and 29 complementary indicators (for monitoring specific actions at the national level) to develop effective monitoring frameworks for oral health.

IMPLEMENT COST-EFFECTIVE, EVIDENCE-BASED, AND POPULATION-WIDE ORAL HEALTH PREVENTION AND PROMOTION MEASURES

Oral diseases and other NCDs share modifiable risk factors, and joint prevention is possible through a multi-sectoral response. WHO's tried and tested NCD "best buys" and 72 other recommended interventions include several evidence-based measures to reduce tobacco use, alcohol use, and unhealthy diets (in particular sugar intake) guiding countries on how to reduce their overall NCD burden with a cost-effective approach. The NCD "best buys" in particular provide countries with a great return on investment – each USD \$1 invested in these interventions would yield a return of USD \$7 by 2030.

WHO has also developed the first set of best-buy interventions specifically addressing oral health, namely: (1) to implement a population-wide mass media campaign to promote the use of toothpaste with a fluoride concentration of 1000-1500 ppm; (2) to apply silver diamine fluoride for arresting dental caries and its progression; and (3) to use glass ionomer cement as a filling material for cavities, after removal of decayed tooth tissue using hand instruments.

Governments have a responsibility to increase oral health literacy as well as access to clean water to reduce consumption of sugary drinks.

FACILITATE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Although oral diseases are largely preventable, the global burden remains unacceptably high. The poor and disadvantaged in society suffer a disproportionately high level of disease and affordable, appropriate care is not accessible to all.

Quality oral health services addressing prevention, early detection, and treatment of oral diseases must be guaranteed for everyone. Additionally, addressing the substantial out-of-pocket expenses associated with oral healthcare and targeting marginalized groups can help reduce oral health inequalities.

BUILD A RESILIENT ORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The planning of human resources for oral health has been limited to simplistic target dentist-population ratios or constant services-population ratios and has not taken thorough account of the levels of, and changes in, population needs.

Governments are urged to develop operational or individualized workforce models adapted to national contexts. Governments should also commit to (1) delivering people-centred care that is tailored to the needs of the people and (2) prioritizing intra- and interprofessional collaborations to improve oral health and thereby general health.

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WORLD ORAL HEALTH DAY

KEEP US INFORMED OF ALL YOUR PLANS AND ACTIVITIES.

CONTACT US IF YOU NEED ANY FURTHER SUPPORT
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Dr Sarkis Sozkes, Türkiye

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Chemin de Joinville 26 • 1216 Geneva • Switzerland

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