

National Smile Month 2012

Media Spokespeople



Partnerships are the key for success

Simon Howell, Director of Campaigns and Fundraising at the British Dental Health Foundation.

First of all, I am delighted that we are now off and running earlier than in previous years in preparation for UK National Smile Month 2012, which promises to be one of the strongest ever in this, our 36th year. I am confident that National Smile Month will continue to grow and make a real impact to the improvement of oral health in the UK.

Despite retaining its serious oral health messages, this year we are placing 'fun' at the heart of the campaign with the introduction of a new "Smile" as our new Campaign logo which is placed right at the centre of the campaign, and in effect replaces the traditional annually changing text-based theme. This is a major step-change and just one of the ideas that promise to make this and subsequent year's campaigns easier for the public to engage with, as we bring the importance of oral health to their attention. With the campaign running from 20 May to 20 June there is plenty of time to plan and get involved.

A central aspect of the campaign of which many may be unaware, is all the hard work that goes on backstage and particularly the tireless work that goes into fundraising and corporate sponsorship. The saying goes that charity begins at home - but for us at the Foundation it's the workplace 27/7 and it plays a vital role.

Working with the right companies is not only essential for the campaign but for the charity as whole and the strong relationships that we have been able to develop over the years have been critical to the success of campaigns like UK National Smile Month.

Support for the campaign from Oral-B, Listerine, Wrigley, MacLean's, and many others has not only brought in additional funding to ensure that the campaign works, but these partnerships also bring us a wealth of invaluable insight into promotion and branding that allow National Smile Month to evolve year-on-year with a fresh approach remaining appealing and relevant to Consumers, the Profession and media.

Our relationships with these partners are built on trust and clearly defined measurable objectives. As with all working relationships, honest and open dialogue from the outset ensures a sense of brand exposure for both sponsors and the campaign as these

relationships remain inclusive and we truly value these important contributions made by our sponsors and supporters.

With the stakes higher than ever in the current economic climate, these corporate partnerships are an increasingly important part of the campaign's success. We are fortunate to have such tremendous support in past years and look forward the continuation and expansion of these mutual corporate relationships which remain so encouraging and positive.

Oral health is a top priority

Dr Nigel Carter, Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation.



Oral health in the UK has dramatically improved since our first campaign back in 1977. Huge advances in technology and dental treatment methods, the introduction of fluoride into toothpaste and a greater presence of dental education have all moved alongside the public's desire for the "perfect" smile. Our teeth as a country are now healthier and better looking than ever before but despite the undoubted progression in the quality of our oral health there are still many aspects of care, particularly in many disadvantaged areas of the UK, which need the support and time to develop. In 2012, National Smile Month will attempt to decrease the gap in oral health that currently exists between the socio-economic groups of the UK, to once again try and improve a nation's health for the better.

Over the last 36 years which National Smile Month has run, the campaign has continued to broadcast positive oral health messages throughout the UK. In some part, the backbone of these principals remain the same today, along with the values of the Foundation itself and we have endeavoured to raise oral health and its importance as a top priority in education and the press.

I have been delighted to see National Smile Month growing consistently as a campaign for many years now. Its success has been down the continued support, to both the campaign and the Foundation itself, from the profession – especially in light of the NHS reforms and the economic downturn, which we first feared could have had a disastrous impact on the investment of oral health education. To all these groups, I thank you.

National Smile Month events organised by practices, hospitals and oral health educators have made a tremendous impact on increasing the scale of the campaign but we are constantly discovering that it is having an impact in other areas as well. Workplaces and in particularly schools are now embracing the campaign with fun sponsored events which is

fantastic, not only for the campaign itself but the impact it's messages have on those who are taking part.

I am certain, and delighted by the fact, that the impact of the oral health campaign on a public level remains as strong as ever. For this, we owe our greatest thanks to the many dental practices up and down the UK who took the time and invested in resources to put hold some spectacular events which not only drew in the crowds, but more importantly, managed to educate people of all ages and backgrounds on the importance and value of maintaining good oral health.

And finally, I would also like to thank our corporate sponsors for National Smile Month; Oral-B, Wrigley, Listerine and Macleans will all heavily contribute and invest in the campaign, of which their efforts are very much appreciate by all here at the Foundation.

I hope you have fun with National Smile Month in 2012, and the best of luck goes out to all those who get involved.

Editor's Notes:

If you're a journalist and would like to speak to Mr Howell or Dr Carter for an interview, please call the British Dental Health Foundation's press team on 01788 539 792.