

Press release

Youth dental care is free up to 18 years of age

24 July 2019

Caring for our teeth right from birth is important, and all New Zealand children are able to enrol for free dental care from birth until their 18th birthday.

In Wairarapa, children up to Year 9 enrol with the Community Dental Service. There is a clinic based at Masterton Intermediate and two roaming mobile clinics that travel to various sites throughout the region, making oral healthcare easier for everyone to access.

From Year 9 up until the age of 18 years, adolescents receive routine dental care FREE from any Wairarapa Dental Clinic.

Rachel Clarke, Wairarapa District Health Board's Youth Oral Health Coordinator, is passionate about improving Wairarapa's oral health. With a background in nursing, Rachel most recently worked as a health specialist with Special Olympics New Zealand before moving to Wairarapa and coming to the DHB. She says about a third of Wairarapa's year 9 to 18 year olds are not attending their free dental care, and she wants to see that change.

"Everyone loves a freebie, and getting your health for free is pretty exciting," Rachel says. "But Wairarapa people are missing out, and there's absolutely no reason for that. I want to make sure our rangatahi (*youth*) get along to receive the care they are entitled to."

"From Year 9 until their 18th birthday, youth can attend a dental practice for a free check-up once a year – this will include the treatment they need. Enrolment forms are completed during Year 8 when students are treated by the Community Dental Service," Rachel explains.

"Every dental clinic in the Wairarapa, and there are seven of them, all provide this free service for Year 9 to 18 year olds so, if you know your teenager has not received their free dental care, book an appointment with the dental practice of your choice and they will sort out the enrolment at the first appointment."

"Right now, we know that about a third of our Wairarapa students are not being seen by a dentist for free oral healthcare," Rachel says. "Every dental clinic in Wairarapa, and there are seven of them, all provide free check-ups for Year 9 to 18 year olds. Our youth can choose where they want to go, phone to enrol, and book an appointment."

"It's just as simple as that," Rachel says.

Other things for youth to do, as well as enrol with a dental practice for free care, is to brush their teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, floss regularly, and make water their drink of choice.

**ENDS
PHOTO FOLLOWS**

Masterton Dental Clinic 50 Perry St Masterton 0800 18 18 28	Grace Dental Centre 43 Chapel St Masterton 06 378 2281	Lumino the Dentists 119 Chapel St Masterton 06 377 4989	Kevin Wong Dental Surgery Cnr Chapel & Renall St 17 Renall St Masterton 06 378 2777
---	--	---	--

Park Rd Dental 30 Park Rd Carterton 06 379 8370	True Dentistry 1a Seddon St Carterton 06 379 8799	Greytown Dental Level 1, The Hub 78 Main St Greytown 06 304 8906
---	---	---

For more information:

**Anna Cardno | Communications Manager
Wairarapa DHB**

.....
Phone +64 (06) 9469 800 x 5883
Direct Dial +64 (06) 9469 883 Mobile: 027 205 24 22
anna.cardno@wairarapa.dhb.org.nz
www.wairarapa.dhb.org.nz

