



# Media Release

## It's Official: Chewing Gum is Good for You!

**Sydney, 25 February 2004** – During August, kids around Australia are being taught how to take care of their teeth as well as how to Snack Smart as part of Dental Awareness Month this year. Specialist children's dentists' from the Australasian Academy of Paediatric Dentistry (AAPD) are spreading the word that chewing sugarfree gum is actually good for you!

When you chew sugarfree gum, like **Extra**<sup>®</sup> for Kids, for 20 minutes after you finish eating, it reduces the chance of getting tooth decay. Children from around 6 years of age can easily chew gum, but it's really up to your parents to decide when you can start.

So what is 'Snack Smart' I hear you ask? Well it's simple. When you're hungry in-between meals, there are some snacks that are better for your teeth than others. Foods like fruit and cheese are much better for your teeth than foods like lollies and biscuits. Because it's sweet & sticky, dried fruit should really only be eaten with a meal, not as a between meal snack. Chewing **Extra**<sup>®</sup> for Kids gives you a sweet treat in between meals, that also helps to clean your teeth.

**Extra**<sup>®</sup> For Kids receives lots of questions from children all over the world regarding chewing gum, here are a few you might find interesting...

**Q: Is sugarfree chewing gum really good for your teeth?**

**A:** Yes - it's hard to believe that something that's fun and tastes great has important dental benefits, but it's true! Here's how it works:

After you eat, bacteria in your mouth feeds off the food left on your teeth. This forms acids which attack tooth enamel and cause tooth decay. Saliva is your body's natural defence against tooth decay. When you chew sugarfree gum, your mouth makes lots of saliva which helps wash the acids and food particles away more quickly to reduce the attack on your teeth and help prevent tooth decay.

**Q: What happens if I swallow my gum?**

**A:** A lot of people have the wrong idea about what happens if you swallow a piece of chewing gum, so we're glad to set the record straight! Chewing gum has three basic ingredients - sweeteners, flavours and gum base (the part that puts the "chew" in chewing gum). The first two ingredients are soluble, meaning they dissolve in your mouth as you chew. The gum base doesn't dissolve and acts just like dietary fibre: although most people don't swallow it, if you do, it simply passes through your system like other foods.

**Q: What's the best way of getting rid of my used gum?**

**A:** **Extra**<sup>®</sup> for Kids is packaged in a paper wrapper, so save it for when you have finished chewing. All you have to do then is wrap it up in the paper and put it in the bin – it's that easy!

**Q: How can I get chewing gum out of my hair?**

**A:** Peanut butter or vegetable oil will soften the gum and make it easier to remove.

**Q: Why don't you make chocolate chewing gum?**

**A:** We wish we could! Unfortunately, we've never found a way to use real chocolate in gum without it making it too mushy to chew. Of course, we could use artificial chocolate flavouring, but it wouldn't taste the same!

So now you know, chewing sugarfree gum is not only fun, but is also good for your teeth!

Wrigley's has been a sponsor of Dental Awareness Month since 2000 and is keenly committed to dental health.

**-Ends-**

**For more information or to arrange an interview with the Australasian Academy of Paediatric Dentistry and Fang, the *Extra*<sup>®</sup> for Kids mascot, please contact: Mango Communications, Tracy Hicks, Ph: (02) 8260 2846  
E-mail: [thicks@mangocommunications.com.au](mailto:thicks@mangocommunications.com.au)**

***About Wrigley's***

*The Wrigley Company is the world's best known manufacturer of chewing gum and was founded in 1891 by William Wrigley Jr. Four generations of Wrigley's have led the company, although it's been publicly traded since 1923. Wrigley's commitment to Australia began in 1915 with the establishment of a factory in Melbourne. Available in 140 countries, Wrigley' brands in Australia include Extra, Extra White, Extra for Kids, PK, Juicy Fruit, Hubba Bubba., Freedent, Air waves, Eclipse gum and Eclipse Flash Strips. Visit [www.wrigley.com](http://www.wrigley.com).*