



Media Release

Helping parents chew the issues during Dental Awareness Month

Sydney, 25 February 2004 – With August 1 marking the start of the Australian Dental Association's (ADA) Dental Awareness Month, tooth decay in children has been identified as one of the leading concerns amongst dentists. The Australasian Academy of Paediatric Dentistry (AAPD) is encouraging parents to ensure their children snack smart and chew sugarfree gum after meals in an effort to help reduce tooth decay amongst children.

Studies have shown that chewing sugarfree gum for 20 minutes straight after eating, stimulates saliva, which reduces plaque acids to help prevent tooth decay. Most children from around 6 years of age can responsibly chew sugarfree gum to help prevent decay. **Extra**[®] for Kids contains Xylitol, a naturally occurring sweetener found in fruit and vegetables, giving children the sweet treat they crave, without damaging their teeth.

With children's dentistry the theme of Dental Awareness Month this year, the focus is on helping parents teach children how to take care of their teeth and educating them on how to snack smart. The AAPD, who specialises in treating children, says getting parents involved is an essential part of every child's oral hygiene.

"Parental involvement plays a large role in shaping children's dental routines. It's important for mums and dads to show kids the right toothbrush to use, how to brush properly, how long to brush for and when to brush, as well as ensuring children visit their dentist twice a year and use floss. Parents should also encourage children to chew sugarfree gum after meals when they can't brush to aid the holistic approach to dental care." said the Academy.

“Smart snacking is just as important because upon eating, plaque feeds on the sugars from food, building up acids in the mouth which attack teeth. Saliva helps wash these plaque acids away. Sugarfree gum is one of the best ways to stimulate saliva, without introducing more sugars and perpetuating the acid attack.”

In a bid to educate youngsters about being environmentally aware, Wrigley’s Marketing Director, John Batistich, said the packaging of **Extra**® for Kids, makes it easy for children to be responsible consumers and to dispose of gum properly. “The individually wrapped pieces of gum mean kids can wrap their gum in the wrapper once they have finished chewing and then drop it in the bin, leaving no mess”

The Academy says the key to good dental health is consistency. “Teach kids how to brush properly and regularly, twice a day and after lunch too where possible. It’s beneficial for children who are old enough to chew sugarfree gum during the day when they can’t brush. Parents who instil good habits in their children from an early age help enormously to keep children’s teeth looking good later in life.”

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

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To obtain broadcast quality audio grabs from Associate Professor Richard Widmer, Australasian Academy of Paediatric Dentistry (AAPD), please visit the Media Game website: www.mediagame.com.au

**For more information or to arrange an interview with the Australasian Academy of Paediatric Dentistry, please contact: Mango Communications
Tracy Hicks, Ph: (02) 8260 2846
E-mail: 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.