

Wednesday, 16 March, 2011

## All smiles for Aboriginal children on 'Mouthguard Day'

Up to 50 local Aboriginal school children will travel to Sydney Dental Hospital on Wednesday, March 16, to be fitted with custom-made mouthguards as part of 'Mouthguard Day' - a promotion designed developed to increase oral health and hygiene awareness.

'Mouthguard Day', will see each child fitted out with an individually fitted mouthguard designed to protect their teeth while playing sport. The children will return on March 23 for adjustments, and on March 30 for assessment and follow up.

'Mouthguard Day' was developed by Rose Nean and Keira Green of the Aboriginal Oral Health Clinic (AOHC), based at the Dental Hospital in Surrey Hills, as part of an oral health promotion targeting local Aboriginal school children.

"Mouthguards have been proven to reduce the number and severity of mouth injuries in sport and during training," Ms Green said.

"A lot of Aboriginal children love playing footy and, as the season is just about to kick off, we thought it was a great opportunity to promote oral health and also raise awareness of the Clinic and the services it offers.

"Establishing good oral health early in life is vital, particularly within the Aboriginal community, which has significantly higher rates poor oral health compared to the rest of the population," she said.

The Aboriginal Oral Health Clinic, which began operation last year, is staffed by four dentists and a team of dental assistants.

It receives patients referred from the three metropolitan Aboriginal Medical Services in Redfern, Campbelltown and Mt Druitt, as well as Aboriginal patients within Sydney and Sydney south west area.

The Clinic also runs a coordinated outreach service, which provides dental services to Aboriginal people living in rural and remote regions of NSW through rostered visits of dental teams to rural and regional Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.

For more information about the Aboriginal Oral Health Clinic call 9293-3438.