

Region testing free dental screening initiative for kids aged 0-3

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Halton Region has launched an oral health pilot project aimed at children aged 0-3, which includes free screenings for babies and toddlers.

The initiative, which will run until June 2017, is part of a larger ongoing oral health program which already includes free screenings at schools and one day per month earmarked for kids up to 17 years old in each of Halton's four municipalities: Oakville, Burlington, Halton Hills and Milton.

The region is offering three free clinics for the pilot project aimed at babies and toddlers. The first will be held in Acton on March 29 at the Early Years Centre, followed by two clinics in Milton on May 4 and May 18 at the Kids and Me neighbourhood group at Southside Community Church.

Families with young children between the ages of 0-3 are encouraged to get free screenings because their child's baby teeth are important for chewing food easily and properly, speaking clearly and holding the space for permanent teeth that are growing underneath, wrote the Region in an email to The IFP.

In addition to the free screenings, the program also includes resources and training about the importance of early dental care and regular check-ups for infants and toddlers.

Families who may need financial assistance to see a dental provider will be provided information about the Healthy Smiles Ontario program so that they can start to take their child for regular visits to a dental provider at an early age, added the region.

If the pilot project is successful, the region says it will consider adding it permanently to Halton's existing oral health programming.

Halton families already have access to free screenings for kids up to 17 years old, which can be accessed by booking an appointment by calling 3-1-1 or (905) 825-6000. As mentioned above



Halton Region is launching a pilot project aimed at oral care for babies and toddlers. The initiative includes free screening clinics in Acton and Milton.

Photo from Metroland News Service

those services are provided one day per month in each Halton community. Spaces are limited, so those wishing to take advantage of the free screenings must call to book an appointment ahead of time.

The region's oral health program is also available to Ontario Works recipients, adults with special needs aged 64 and under, as well as adults aged 65 and over.

Visit halton.ca/living_in_halton/public_health/health_clinics/oral_health_clinics for more information.



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