



## Tooth Talk

by Linda Kreutzer, RDH

### Candy, Pop, and Cavities

With Halloween just over, maybe it's time to think about trick or treats and how excessive sugar decays teeth. Here are a few ideas on how to keep decay away from your children's teeth.

Eating foods and drinking liquids high in sugar make excessive **plaque** on our teeth. This happens to children and adults alike. Plaque is high in **acid**, which comes directly from the sugar. It's the acid that makes holes (cavities) in tooth enamel.



New dentist Mark Moeller (l) and Linda Kreutzer visit the Siletz Head Start classroom.

**Plaque acid** is produced for 20 minutes after eating or drinking something high in sugar. This means that after just one sip of pop, **acid** is at work decaying our teeth for 20 minutes! After 20 minutes, our saliva neutralizes the acid. If pop is sipped all day (instead of water), the teeth are constantly bathed in sugar. It's like giving your teeth an **acid** bath all day long!

Unfortunately, candy bars do the same thing. It's best to let your children eat a candy bar, then ask them to brush their teeth right away. If they drink a pop, have them drink it all down and get it over with, then ask them to brush immediately afterward. If brushing isn't possible, rinsing with water helps, as does chewing a stick of **sugarless** gum. This way, plaque acids are at work for shorter lengths of time in the mouth.

## TPEP Presents Former Smoker Profiles

### Angela's Story

by Angela Martin

I was 8 years old when I smoked my first cigarette. I began smoking heavy at age 13.

I was able to quit for two babies, but then I'd start back up. By my last two babies, I had to smoke because my nerves were **shot** (that's my excuse anyway).

I started smoking because **everyone** I was around smoked. It seemed normal and they looked like it helped them deal with stress (how I don't know, maybe because, although temporary, the nicotine sensation gives good vibes to your nervous system, giving you the feeling of relief – or so it seemed then).

I quit cold turkey about four months ago. Why? Because if I continued to tell myself one less cigarette, I would find myself smoking more than before. The funny thing is that even under a lot of stress (new job, relationship problems, and kids everywhere around me), I found myself sick of smoking. My throat hurt, and it still does even though I'm now not smoking.

I tell myself when I feel my throat hurting that I knew the results of smoking and yet I still continued to stick a smoke in my mouth. In a way, it was suicidal. My kids also were sick of seeing it and my daughter (God bless her) begged me to quit because she told me she wants to see me get old.

And with all this, I think to myself, “Do I really miss something that wasn't good for my family and myself? Sure, but **not** more than my kids would miss me. Not more than looking in the mirror 10 years down the road with a tube in my throat. It's like anything else in your life, if it's no good for you, let it go and go on with your life without it.” It sounds easy and so far it has been that easy for me.

*TPEP note: If you'd like to share your story, please contact the Tobacco Prevention & Education Program at 541-444-1030 or 1-800-648-0449. What you share can make a difference in someone else's life. Thank you.*

## The Siletz Breastfeeding Circle

As part of the Siletz Diabetic Grant, the Siletz Tribe held its first Breastfeeding Circle on Oct. 15 at the Siletz Housing Department office.

Anyone who is breastfeeding, anyone who has breastfed, and anyone who is currently pregnant and would like to learn more about the importance of breastfeeding were invited. Barbara Danna, RN, and Erin Hume, PA, presented educational materials. There was a Talking Circle for moms who shared and learned from each other's personal experiences. There was food, drink, and gifts.

The purpose of the Breastfeeding Circle is to respectfully promote, educate, and support breastfeeding in our community.

So what is the connection between diabetes and breastfeeding? Native Americans are among the higher-risk groups for developing diabetes. Research shows that infants who are breastfed for six to 12 months are less likely to develop diabetes.

Breastfeeding not only reduces the risk of diabetes, it also protects infants at the time of nursing. Immunities are passed from mother to baby through breast milk. Teeth and gums are healthier. Suckling on the breast better forms the infant's

mouth so permanent teeth come in straighter. Babies who are breastfed have fewer ear infections and digestive problems. Breastfed babies also have higher IQs.

Breast milk is a “living food” that is specific to your baby's needs. As the baby grows and changes, so does your breast milk. The health benefits of breastfeeding last a lifetime.

Breastfeeding also is nurturing for mothers. Breastfeeding helps the uterus return to a non-pregnant state with less risk of excessive and dangerous bleeding. Breastfeeding reduces a woman's risk of certain cancers, osteoporosis (thinning of the bones), and obesity. When a woman is breastfeeding, her body releases chemicals into her blood that cause her to relax and feel less stress. Breastfeeding also increases healthy digestion in mom and baby.

A Breastfeeding Circle will take place every two weeks. Please call the clinic for information, 1-800-648-0449 or 541-444-1030.

Nurture your baby/nurture yourself – get your flu shot today. Protect yourself and your family. Please call the Siletz Clinic and schedule an appointment with a nurse.



**Breastfeed**