Oral Health Day LTE Template

Drafted February 22, 2018

**Staying tobacco-free is one of the keys to good oral health**

Dear Editor,

SHARE THAT TUESDAY, MARCH 20 IS WORLD ORAL HEALTH DAY, A DAY FOCUSED ON THE ROLE GOOD ORAL HYGIENE PLAYS IN OVERALL HEALTH. SHARE SOME OF THE WAYS TO MAINTAIN ORAL HEALTH, LIKE BRUSHING AND FLOSSING DAILY, DRINKING FLUORIDATED WATER INSTEAD OF SUGARY BEVERAGES, AND VISITING YOUR DENTIST REGULARLY. FOLLOW THAT BY SHARING THAT BEING TOBACCO-FREE IS ANOTHER WAY TO KEEP YOUR TEETH AND MOUTH HEALTHY.

LET READERS KNOW THAT TOBACCO USE CAN CAUSE CANCERS OF THE MOUTH, TONGUE, CHEEK, AND GUM, AS WELL AS CANCER IN THE ESOPHAGUS AND PANCREAS. EXPLAIN THAT THE ORAL HEALTH RISKS OF TOBACCO GO BEYOND CANCER, AND INCLUDE THINGS LIKE GUM DISEASE, STAINED TEETH, TOOTH DECAY, AND BAD BREATH.

TALK ABOUT HOW THE DANGERS OF TOBACCO USE AREN’T JUST LIMITED TO MOUTH ISSUES **(GIVE A FEW EXAMPLES FROM** [**https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/tobacco**](https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/tobacco)**)**.

DISCUSS HOW THE BEST WAY FOR YOUTH TO AVOID THESE ISSUES IS TO AVOID TOBACCO USE IN THE FIRST PLACE. ALSO LET TOBACCO USERS KNOW THAT IT’S NEVER TOO LATE TO QUIT. SHARE A FEW OF THE IMMEDIATE AND LONG-TERM HEALTH BENEFITS OF QUITTING **(YOU CAN FIND THEM AT** [**https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/tobacco/cessation-fact-sheet**](https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/tobacco/cessation-fact-sheet)**)**.

ENCOURAGE TOBACCO USERS TO GET HELP BY CALLING WISCONSIN TOBACCO QUIT LINE AT 1-800-QUIT NOW, OR BY TALKING TO THEIR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER (INCLUDING DENTAL HYGIENISTS AND DENTISTS). LET READERS KNOW THEY CAN LEARN ABOUT LOCAL TOBACCO PREVENTION EFFORTS AT **(COALITION URL, SOCIAL MEDIA, ETC.)**.