



World Oral Health Day  
20 March



# BE PROUD OF YOUR MOUTH

## ACTION TOOLKIT FOR GOVERNMENTS AND POLICYMAKERS



[www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)

#MouthProud #WOHD21

Global Partner



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# World Oral Health Day

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On the 20 March every year, we ask the world to unite to help reduce the burden of oral diseases, which affect individuals, health systems and economies everywhere.

**Its purpose: to empower people with the knowledge, tools and confidence to secure good oral health.**

Oral diseases are a major health concern for many countries and negatively impact people throughout their lives. Oral diseases lead to pain and discomfort, social isolation and loss of self-confidence, and they are often linked to other serious health issues. And yet, there is no reason to suffer: most oral health conditions are largely preventable and can be treated in their early stages.

That is why World Oral Health Day (WOHD) is so vital as it:

- **empowers** individuals to take personal action;
- **encourages** schools and youth groups to deliver learning activities about oral health;
- **provides** a unified platform for oral health professionals and the wider healthcare community to educate the populations they serve;
- **urges** governments and policymakers to champion better oral health for all.

WOHD is an initiative of FDI World Dental Federation; an organization that brings together the world of dentistry with the aim of achieving optimal oral health for everyone.

Governments and policymakers play a crucial role in raising awareness about the importance of good oral health, and your commitment is key to driving action and policy to ensure happier, healthier lives. Use this toolkit to understand some of the key issues in oral health and the strategies that will strengthen it, to access all the campaign materials and for ideas on how you can get involved.



# Campaign theme: 2021–2023

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The theme for the next three years sends out a simple but powerful message:

**BE PROUD OF YOUR MOUTH.**

In other words, value and take care of it.

This year, we want to inspire change by focusing on the importance of oral health for overall health, **BECAUSE GOOD ORAL HEALTH CAN HELP YOU LIVE A LONGER, HEALTHIER LIFE.**

And that is something worth taking action for.



# Campaign key messages

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It is estimated that oral diseases affect nearly 3.5 billion people, which makes it the most common health condition globally.

WOHD provides an important platform to raise awareness about oral health and the pivotal role it plays in maintaining overall health, well-being and quality of life.

The main campaign messages are:

✓ **Oral health is one of the main pillars of overall health and well-being**

A healthy mouth allows people to speak, smile, smell, taste, touch, chew, swallow and convey a range of emotions with confidence and without pain, discomfort and disease, e.g. tooth decay (dental caries). Maintaining good oral health can have a positive impact on the management of diabetes and could help in the prevention of other health conditions, such as cardiovascular disease (heart disease and stroke), pneumonia and some cancers. Therefore, it is integral to securing a good quality of life.

**FACT:** You can't be healthy without good oral health. Oral diseases may directly affect a limited area of the human body, but their consequences impact the body as a whole.

✓ **Managing risk factors for oral diseases can also help avoid other health conditions**

The good news is that controlling the four main risk factors for oral diseases, which include an unhealthy diet high in sugar, tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol and poor oral hygiene, will also help in the prevention of other diseases, such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, cancer and diabetes.

**FACT:** Implementing oral health promotion strategies and empowering people with the knowledge to make informed decisions can help in disease prevention.

# Campaign key messages (cont.)

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## ✓ Most oral health conditions are largely preventable and can be treated in their early stages

Oral health as well as general health can be protected through the following actions:

- Practicing a good oral hygiene routine, which includes brushing for two minutes, twice a day, with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Visiting the dentist for regular check-ups and dental cleanings.
- Eating a well-balanced diet low in sugar and high in fruit and vegetables, and favouring water as the main drink.
- Stopping use of all forms of tobacco, including chewing of areca nuts.
- Limiting alcohol consumption.
- Using protective equipment, such as a mouthguard, when doing contact sports and travelling on bicycles to reduce the risk of injuries.

**FACT:** Sugar, a major contributor to obesity, is also the primary cause of tooth decay. More than 530 million children suffer from tooth decay in their primary teeth (milk teeth).

## ✓ Universal Health Coverage: every person, everywhere should have access to the health services they need without the risk of financial hardship when paying for them

Widespread disparities exist around access to, and uptake of, oral health services. Universal Health Coverage (UHC) cannot be achieved overnight. However, WOHD is an opportunity to persuade our governments to do more. Countries at all income levels can take steps to move closer to achieving UHC and develop their own package that integrates oral health and fits the needs of their population.

**FACT:** Oral diseases disproportionately affect the poor and socially-disadvantaged members of society. Essential oral health services should be available, accessible and affordable for all.

# Government strategies to strengthen oral health

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The 2011 United Nations (UN) Political Declaration on Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) recognizes that oral diseases pose a major health burden. Its subsequent Declaration on Universal Health Coverage in 2019 commits to strengthen efforts to address oral health.

Populations need to be empowered to make informed choices, and we rely on governments to take responsibility and safeguard the oral health of their citizens by implementing effective policies. Through individual action combined with government-driven population-based strategies, good oral health and general health can be secured.

## Include oral health indicators in routine health surveillance

Oral disease surveillance is the systematic collection and analysis of data that provides information on a country's oral disease burden, population groups at risk, morbidity, risk factors and determinants. It helps inform a country's national response to the burden of oral disease and enables the monitoring of health outcomes, trends and risk factors.

Oral disease surveillance can also be integrated into existing NCD monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Collected data should then be compiled in repositories and made universally accessible for research and to policymakers.

## Implement a national oral health action plan

The most effective way to reduce your country's oral disease burden is through a national oral health action plan that is integrated into strategies to address the burden of untreated NCDs. This should include evidence-based and cost-effective interventions to improve oral health throughout the life-course.

Integrating oral health perspectives into a national NCD plan will help tackle cross-cutting issues, improve collaboration between oral disease and other NCD groups, strengthen health systems and ultimately help reduce the burden of oral disease and other NCDs. Your government can also integrate oral health into national strategies for NCD risk factors such as sugar, tobacco and alcohol.

## Integrate oral health into primary care

Globally, there are severe disparities in oral health and inequities in access to oral healthcare. Incorporating oral care services as part of comprehensive primary healthcare can help reduce cost and quality shortfalls by treating patients under the same system.

Universal access to primary oral healthcare should cover, at a minimum, pain relief, oral health promotion, and oral diseases management, including tooth decay. Your government can also integrate basic oral healthcare into its UHC framework to improve oral health outcomes and reduce inequalities in access to care.

## Integrate essential oral health services into your country's universal healthcare package

UHC provides a unique opportunity to improve access to essential oral health services and address substantial out-of-pocket expenses associated with oral healthcare in many countries. The integration of essential oral health services into UHC commitments will help improve health outcomes and reduce fundamental inequalities in access to care.

# Government strategies to strengthen oral health (cont.)

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## Implement interventions to reduce the intake of sugar

Eating excessive amounts of sugar from snacks, processed foods, and drinks not only causes tooth decay, but is a major contributor to obesity and increases the risk of diabetes. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that adults should limit their sugar intake to six teaspoons, and children to three teaspoons, per day. Nutritionally people do not need any sugar in their diet.

Your government can apply taxation on sugar-rich foods and sugar-sweetened beverages. Fiscal policies that lead to at least a 20% increase in the retail price of sugary drinks would result in proportional reductions in consumption of such products. You can also work together with schools to implement 'water-only' policies for drinks, ban unhealthy snacks and ensure healthy food is available on school grounds.

Other effective strategies include, transparent food labelling with sugar icons to help consumers make informed decisions, and restricting the marketing of sugar-rich foods and beverages, especially to children.

## Offer universal access to affordable and effective fluoride

The regular, appropriate use of fluoride plays a key role in effective tooth decay prevention strategies. There is a large body of scientific evidence from the last 70 years demonstrating the effectiveness of fluoride use in population-wide interventions.

Fluoride toothpaste is a highly desirable public health measure and WHO recommends the removal of taxes and tariffs on fluoride toothpaste. There are several cost-effective options to make fluoride toothpaste

available to populations, which can and should be applied according to your country's regional realities and legislation.

## Implement the WHO 'best buys' and other recommended interventions

The WHO's 16 tried-and-tested 'best buys' and 72 other recommended interventions provide a menu of evidence-based options to help countries reduce their oral disease and overall NCD burden. The 'best buys' provide countries with a great return on investment – for each USD \$1 invested in the WHO 'best buys' yields a return of USD \$7 by 2030.

## Provide adequately trained workforces

Differences in disease burden, inequalities in access to care impacted by socioeconomic determinants of health, and the unequal distribution of dentists between, and within nations, present major challenges to global healthcare systems. Population-wide access to adequately trained oral health professionals is critical and this demands innovative and multi-sectoral and inter-professional collaboration.

## Adopt an 'oral health in all policies' approach

Your government can systematically adopt oral health in all policies, including those aimed at reducing poverty, increasing social inclusion, improving the general levels of education and employment, reducing barriers to healthcare, promoting affordable housing, safe water and sanitation, and protecting minority and vulnerable groups to achieve sustainable improvement in health and oral health care status.



# Campaign materials

Driving public awareness on oral health issues goes hand-in-hand with initiatives aimed at changing policy.

A range of campaign materials are available to support your WOHD activities. Please use them freely to help raise awareness of *why* it is important to 'Be Proud of Your Mouth' and *how* to take care of it properly. Ideas on how you might use these materials have also been provided (p. 14-15). They aim to educate and **engage your communities**, as well as encourage **colleagues** and other **government departments** to get behind WOHD.

Below is a snapshot of what is available.

Posters to raise awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Main campaign posters</li><li>• Visit the dentist posters</li><li>• Children's poster</li></ul>
Resources to educate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fact sheets</li><li>• Key message cards</li></ul>
Templates to support events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Customizable event poster</li><li>• Customizable invites</li><li>• Children's colouring templates</li><li>• Make your own campaign frames</li></ul>
Digital and social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Campaign video</li><li>• Create your own poster</li><li>• WOHD profile covers</li><li>• Social media templates and gifs</li><li>• Instagram filter</li></ul>
Action toolkits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A toolkit for everyone, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individuals, workplaces and community groups</li><li>• Schools and youth groups</li><li>• Oral health professionals and the wider healthcare community</li></ul></li></ul>
WOHD logo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A multilingual logo</li></ul>

You can download the World Oral Health Day materials at: [www.worldoralhealthday.org/resources](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org/resources). They are available in English, French and Spanish.



# Posters to raise awareness



## Main campaign posters

Display and distribute the campaign posters; there's a wide selection to choose from.

## Visit the dentist posters

Promote the importance of regular check-ups.

## Children's poster

Empower children to practice good oral health.

# Resources to educate



## Fact sheets

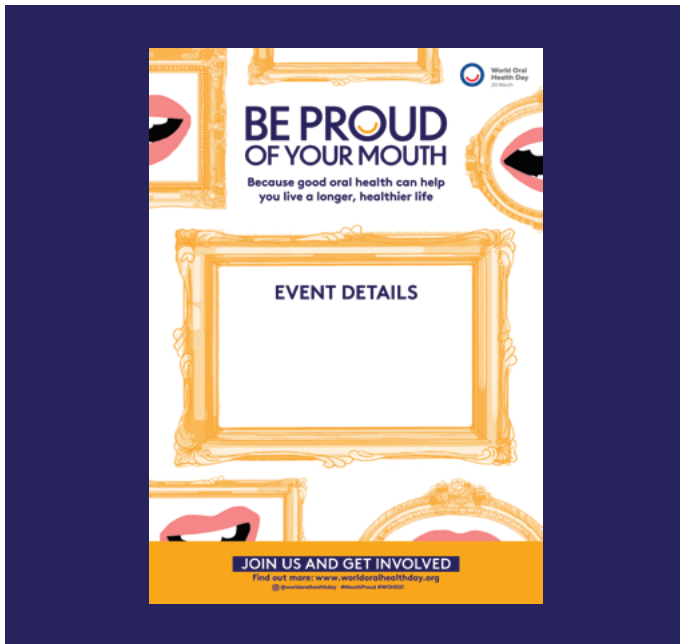
Share the facts about oral diseases and how to prevent them.



## Key message cards

These event-friendly handouts draw attention to key oral health messages.

# Templates to support events



## Customizable event poster

Personalize the poster and publicize your events.



## Customizable invites

Let people know when and where to go to join your events.



## Children's colouring templates

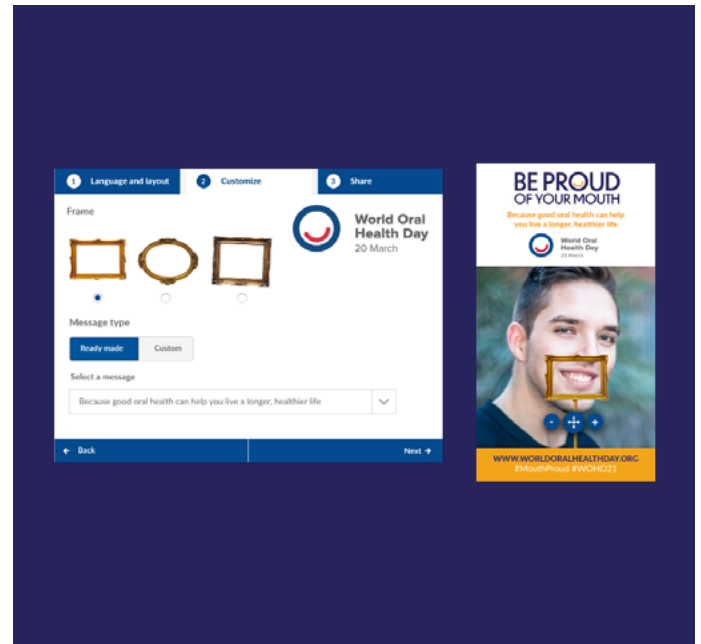
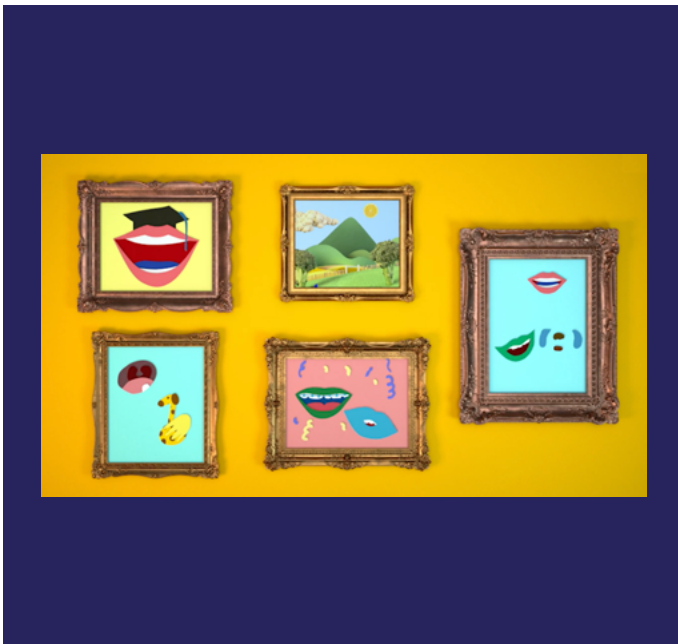
Run competitions using the colouring templates linked to the campaign.



## Make your own campaign frames

Use the templates to create a stand out celebration for World Oral Health Day.

# Digital and social media



## Campaign video

Inspire everyone to take action by showing and sharing the animated campaign video.

[www.youtube.com/fdiworlddental](http://www.youtube.com/fdiworlddental)

## Create your own poster

Create, customize and share your own campaign posters on our #MouthProud wall and directly to social media at:

[www.worldoralhealthday.org/custom-poster](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org/custom-poster)



## WOHD profile covers

Use the social media profile covers to show your support online.

# Digital and social media (cont.)



## Social media templates and gifs

Encourage your networks to join the conversation by circulating the ready-made messages or share your own.

## Instagram filter

Visit the World Oral Health Day Instagram page and click the smiley face icon to find and use the filter.



# Action toolkits

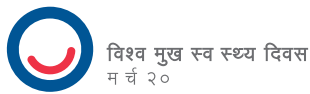


## A toolkit for everyone

This is one in a series of Action toolkits to help get as many people as possible involved in WOHD.



# WOHD logo



## A multilingual logo

Unify your efforts with the rest of the world by using the logo in all your WOHD communication materials.

It is available in 39 languages at:

[www.worldoralhealthday.org/logo-usage-guidelines](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org/logo-usage-guidelines)

# Use the toolkit to take action

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Your actions will help to keep us moving towards our collective goal: better oral and overall health for all.

WOHD also provides the ideal platform for governments and policymakers to collaborate with their National Dental Association. Reach out to yours and map out WOHD activities and oral health solutions together.

## Show your personal support for the campaign

Make a statement by creating your own campaign poster and encourage colleagues and other departments to take part.

- **Create your own posters online:** go to the WOHD website, upload your photos, and share them on our #MouthProud wall at: [www.worldoralhealthday/custom-poster](http://www.worldoralhealthday/custom-poster)
- **Send us a photo:** print your personalized poster, then hold it up or display it in your workspace and take a photo. Send it to us by email, so we can publish it on our social media channels. Email us at: [wohd@fdiworlddental.org](mailto:wohd@fdiworlddental.org)

## Run events

Leverage WOHD to launch your country's oral health action plan or to make noise around the commitments your government is making to address the oral disease burden. Previous country-led WOHD initiatives have galvanized communities in a variety of ways (not an exhaustive list):

- **Free dental check-ups** in familiar environments, like shopping malls.
- **Oral hygiene workshops** to demonstrate how to brush and floss properly.
- **Talks** about the importance of good oral health and its connection to overall health.
- **Distributing** oral health information to encourage healthy habits.

- **Open days** at dental practices to help ease people's fears around visiting the dentist.
- **Handing out** free toothbrushes and toothpaste to those from low-income backgrounds.
- **Walks** to raise awareness of WOHD and its aims.

**Reach out to your network of journalists to generate media coverage for your events.**

## Reach out to different audiences and groups

Good oral health is important for everyone. Distribute the campaign materials and spread WOHD messages as far and wide as you can. For example, target:

- teachers and schoolchildren;
- parent and children groups;
- childbirth and pregnancy classes;
- old people's homes or community groups for the elderly;
- families at shopping malls and libraries;
- hard-to-reach groups through community centres;
- ethnic groups through places of worship;
- local hospitals, primary care clinics and doctor's surgeries.

# Use the toolkit to take action (cont.)

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## Engage children and schools

Poor oral health can negatively affect how a young mouth develops and leads to more than 50 million school hours lost each year. Education can help change that.

- **School events:** organize talks, demonstrations and free dental check-ups for children.
- **Teaching resources:** send out, or direct schools and educators to the *Action toolkit for schools and youth groups*. It offers learning activities linked to the WOHD campaign and ideas on how to spread important oral health messages to parents and caregivers. It also signposts *Mouth Heroes for Schools*, FDI's year-round teaching resource for children aged 5–9 years:  
[www.fdiworlddental.org/mouth-heroes-for-schools](http://www.fdiworlddental.org/mouth-heroes-for-schools)
- **Run a national competition:** in keeping with the campaign's key visual, use the colouring templates to encourage children to design and colour frames of their own.

## Illuminate your building

Work with your communications team to impart important oral health messages in newsworthy ways. For example, light up your government building with photos of people framing their mouths proudly to show their commitment to oral health.

## Spread the word on your website

Feature WOHD on your website to show you are getting behind this important global health awareness day and to encourage others to get involved.

- Write an official statement about WOHD.
- Share the campaign video.
- Show the campaign posters.
- Share your personalized posters.
- Direct people to the Action toolkits.

## Get social

Social media is an undeniable force in today's world. Leverage its power for WOHD and to educate and connect with people and communities. The toolkit includes a variety of content for social platforms.

- **Campaign hashtags:** tag your posts with the official hashtags so that others can find and join the conversation. **#WOHD21 #MouthProud**
- **Social media templates and gifs:** these are filled with facts that emphasize why it is important to *Be Proud of Your Mouth* and the actions that can be taken to take care of it. Share them on your social media platforms. We have also provided ideas for ready-made posts that could accompany them to help kick things off.
- **Create your own poster:** share your customized poster with the world and encourage others to follow suit.  
[www.worldoralhealthday.org/custom-poster](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org/custom-poster)
- **Instagram filter:** apply the fun campaign filter to your photos and Stories.
- **WOHD profile covers:** use them to build a strong campaign presence online.
- **Share the campaign video:** video is enormously popular on social platforms.

# Ready-made posts to get you started

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#OralDiseases affect nearly 3.5 billion people globally. This #WorldOralHealthDay, let's come together to send out a simple but powerful message: Be Proud of Your Mouth, not just for the sake of your #OralHealth, but for your overall health too.

[www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)

#MouthProud #WOHD21

We are committed to strengthening oral health in our country. This #WorldOralHealthDay, we will begin to take the necessary steps to establish a national #OralHealth action plan to improve the lives of the populations we serve.

[www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)

#MouthProud #WOHD21

Essential #OralHealth services should be available, accessible and affordable for all. We are taking action to integrate these services into our national #UniversalHealthCoverage package. What action will you take this #WorldOralHealthDay?

[www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)

#MouthProud #WOHD21 #UHC

More than 530 million children suffer from #ToothDecay in their #PrimaryTeeth, which can lead to pain, infection, #ToothLoss and missed #school days. This #WorldOralHealthDay, let's take action to fight tooth decay.

[www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)

#MouthProud #WOHD21

#ToothDecay is preventable, yet millions of people suffer because of it. Be Proud of Your Mouth. In other words, value and take care of it. What will you do for your #OralHealth this #WorldOralHealthDay?

[www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)

#MouthProud #WOHD21

Be Proud of Your Mouth. Practicing a good oral hygiene routine at home, combined with regular visits to the #dentist, is one of the most important things you can do for your oral and overall health.

[www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)

#MouthProud #WOHD21

There is so much everyone can do to reduce their risk of #OralDiseases as well as other serious health conditions. What will you do this #WorldOralHealthDay?

[www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)

#MouthProud #WOHD21

#Oralhealth is vital for general health and well-being. The good news is that oral health can be maintained by being aware of your risk factors and taking action to prevent disease. This #WorldOralHealthDay, inform yourself and others for a healthier life.

[www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)

#MouthProud #WOHD21



# Put yourself on the map of activities

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The global map of activities captures everything taking place around the world. Submit your activity or event on the map at:

[www.worldoralhealthday.org/map-activities](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org/map-activities)

Be as detailed as you can; hopefully people in your country will be looking to get involved.

Your plans will help to inspire other governments and policymakers around the world. You can also search for all the WOHD campaigns happening near you and support them by joining the action.



## Contact us

If you have any questions about World Oral Health Day and the information contained in this toolkit, feel free to contact FDI World Dental Federation at:

[wohd@fdiworlddental.org](mailto:wohd@fdiworlddental.org)

# Be inspired by previous campaigns

WOHD relies on everyone's collective actions to reach different audiences and spread important oral health messages far and wide.



Credit: Manila Water Foundation

In the Philippines, a remake of the official WOHD video was shown in cinemas, and shared across social media.



Credit: Hellenic Dental Association

In Greece, the Hellenic Parliament building was illuminated with the WOHD logo.



Credit: MoHFW India

In India, Tweets sent by the Ministry of Health went viral thanks to their large number of followers.



Credit: South African Dental Association

In South Africa, dental screenings were organized in schools, reaching more than 3,000 children.

# Thank you for supporting World Oral Health Day.

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Keep us informed of all your plans and activities.  
Contact us if you need any further support or  
information: [wohd@fdiworlddental.org](mailto:wohd@fdiworlddental.org)

[www.worldoralhealthday.org](http://www.worldoralhealthday.org)

 [instagram.com/worldoralhealthday](https://www.instagram.com/worldoralhealthday)

 [facebook.com/FDIWorldDentalFederation](https://www.facebook.com/FDIWorldDentalFederation)

 [twitter.com/fdiworlddental](https://twitter.com/fdiworlddental)

 [youtube.com/fdiworlddental](https://www.youtube.com/fdiworlddental)

 [linkedin.com/company/fdiworlddental federation](https://www.linkedin.com/company/fdiworlddental federation)

## WOHD Task Team

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