

Let's Talk About...

# *Pregnancy and Paediatric Oral Hygiene*



***An Introduction to the Molar Mentoring Pregnancy and  
Paediatric Oral Hygiene Course (Including Fluoride  
Application)***



Celebrity Stacey Solomon has said that her teeth were affected badly during her second pregnancy to the point where she now has veneers. This highlights an important issue; are mothers missing out on vital information and advice when it comes to oral hygiene during pregnancy? The NHS offers free dental care to pregnant women and for one year after their baby is born, is this not made clear enough to expectant mothers? Who should be responsible for conveying this information? Midwives? Health visitors? Or dental professionals including dental nurses?

After consultation with the British Society of Paediatric Dentistry and extensive research (see below), Molar Mentoring feel the time is right to launch our new course in Pregnancy and Paediatric Oral Hygiene. This will enable dental professionals, midwives and health visitors to provide up to date guidance, information and advice for expectant mothers and mothers with babies up to 1 year old. After undertaking this course, dental professionals will be able to offer relevant clinics in practice, something that is not currently done in the UK. We believe that by offering this course to health and dental professionals we can help reduce the rate of caries seen in children as well as influence pregnant women in to attending their dental practice to have their regular dental examinations.

In the UK 31% of 5-year-olds and 46% of 8-year-olds present with obvious tooth decay, this has led to 43,000 dental general anaesthetics taking place for children, between 2016 and 2017 (source: [mouthcarematters.hee.nhs.uk](http://mouthcarematters.hee.nhs.uk)).



On conducting a survey with 100 new mothers, Molar Mentoring found that not one of the participants received any professional guidance or information, products or instruction, from health visitors or midwives, on how to look after their own oral health during pregnancy or after giving birth. Furthermore, the mothers stated that no advice or information on how to care for the mouth of their baby, teething matters, toothbrushing or suitable fluoride products was given as part of their post-natal care.

Molar Mentoring then reached out to 100 midwives and health visitors to conduct a survey to establish what training regarding oral health for expectant mothers and their babies is given. The results were as follows:

- All 100 participants stated that they had received no formal training in providing oral health care advice for pregnant women but did know that dental treatment on the NHS is free whilst pregnant.
- All 100 participants stated that they had received no formal training in providing oral health care advice for babies up to 1 year of age. None of them knew anything about recommended products.
- One participant asked if babies need oral health care.
- Only one participant had been given training on how to recognise oral thrush in babies.
- One midwife responded that it is the health visitor's role to offer all oral health advice for expectant mothers and then for the mother and baby after birth.
- All 100 participants agreed that they feel they would like to receive formal training on oral health care and instruction for mothers and babies.



## **Molar Mentoring Pregnancy and Paediatric Oral Hygiene Course (Including Fluoride Application)**

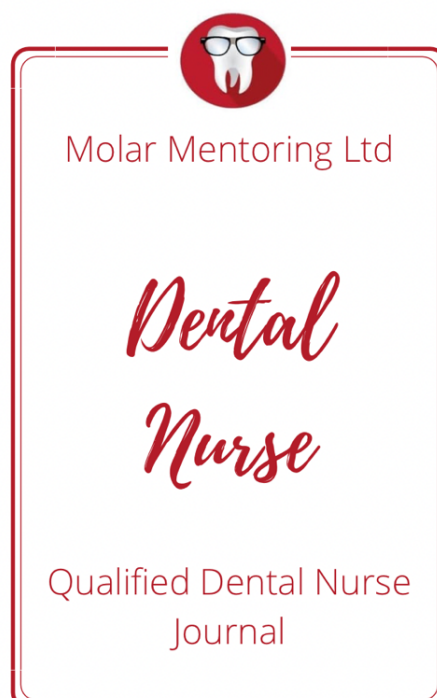
Some examples of what the course covers follow:

- **Oral Health Care for Pregnant Women**
- Pregnancy gingivitis
- Conditions of the oral cavity associated with pregnancy
- Nutrition and oral care
- **Oral Health Care for Babies**
- How to look after the baby's gums before teething
- When to start brushing and fluoride requirements
- Nutrition and diet
- Teething

Also included as part of this course is the Molar Mentoring fluoride application course, meaning that GDC registered dental nurses can extend their duties by providing the application of topical dental fluoride to patients in their practices.

We wish to educate and encourage dental nurses so that they may lead clinics for expectant and new mothers and provide the essential information and advice that is needed. Dental nurses are in a prime position to offer these clinics at their practices, as they will be able to identify pregnant or new mothers day-to-day in surgery and give them the priority required, especially as we know there is a link between the dental health of mothers and their children. With the current COVID-19 pandemic still causing havoc in the dental sector, there's no reason why these clinics cannot be held virtually, through zoom for example. The dental nurse can deliver information on what effects hormonal changes have on the mouth, dietary advice, oral care etc and there will still be the opportunity for questions to be asked and answered.

The Pregnancy and Paediatric Oral Hygiene course provides verifiable CPD. Molar Mentoring have now launched the "Qualified Dental Nurse Journal", perfect for recording your CPD accurately for the GDC and available as a digital download or printed. This can be found on our website at [www.molarmentoring.co.uk](http://www.molarmentoring.co.uk)





## **\*Other Oral Health Initiatives in the UK**

- One Part Per Million: Active in the Yorkshire and Humber region, providing training for dental nurses to hold clinics in practice to encourage oral health care. UDA incentives are available to practices to hold these clinics.
- Mini Mouthcare Matters: A campaign to encourage all nursing, medical and healthcare professionals to identify common oral and dental conditions. Providing all patients in hospital, with a toothbrush if they present without one and encouraging good oral hygiene practice whilst in hospital, instilling good practices to take home with them.

