

Inter-Professional Engagement Module 2025 - 2026



UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH



Peninsula
Dental
Social Enterprise

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How does the Inter-Professional Engagement (IPE) Module work?

The IPE module is one of the building blocks for students at Peninsula Dental School introducing students to core academic skills in exploring, searching and selecting evidence-based information as well as developing societal and community awareness so students understand their future role in the healthcare system and wider society. Working in Enquiry Based Learning (EBL) and Dental Therapy and Hygiene (DTH) groups, students are introduced to the concept of community engagement and social accountability during this module.

Building their skills and knowledge year on year, students are given the opportunity to meet with local organisations in their 1st year, enabling them to gain an understanding of how a particular community group is supported locally during IPE1.

They then utilise the knowledge and experience gained from IPE1 to devise and deliver a health improvement project for a specific target group within the community as part of IPE2.

It would be impossible to deliver this module without the amazing, collaborative support of our host organisations, academic team and of course the enthusiasm of our students. A huge thank you to all involved who have made this module such a success.

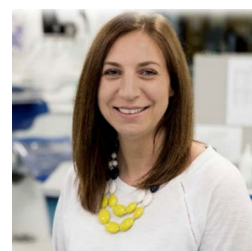


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1st and 2nd year Inter-Professional Engagement Module Lead





IPE2 2025/2026



Investigation

30 Hygiene Therapy Students
70 Dental Students
9 Academic Tutors
12 Host Organisations



Design and Deliver

- Stay & Play sessions
- Classroom activities
- Workshops
- Singing session
- Drop-in

Evaluate

- Achieved aim & objectives
- Met over 400 people
- Met with 50 Staff
- Over 350 members of public



Reflect and Understand

Students reported they were:

- More confident
- Understanding
- More empathetic
- Less judgemental



Inter-Professional Engagement 1

An introduction to community

During the IPE1 module students undertake research in preparation for interviewing a representative from a local community organisation. These discussions facilitate students to understand how communities' function, the impacts of demography and lifestyle issues on local people and helps them explore how local people access the services available and why. This approach is a gentle introduction for students, who are very early in their professional training, to acquire an understanding of some of the social and health inequalities that exist within communities and how this may relate to some of the specific health and oral health challenges.

Additionally, it enables students to develop an early understanding of the wider determinants of health such as environment; employment and education which influence health behaviours and health outcomes, and which directly impact on oral health, use of dental services and quality of life. The experiential learning experience and impact remains high and of immense benefit to students.



“ I enjoyed working in a group with new people from my course ”

“ Helped me to learn how to communicate effectively and professionally ”



“ It’s been really very helpful being able to go out and visit charities and ask them questions to gain insight into our communities ”

“ It was amazing to be able to get involved with people who really focus on the wellbeing of the community and to see why the wider determinants of health are important ”

“ This opportunity provided me with an opportunity for personal growth and self-discovery ”

“ Engaging with our community helped us better understand how collaborative care is crucial in addressing health challenges ”

“ I learned that while first-time experiences are often challenging, embracing discomfort is essential for progress and development ”

“ Working with different colleagues and getting to share our skills for this specific project was very beneficial ”





Inter-Professional Engagement 2

Engaging with the community

Linking together the education of dental and dental therapy and hygiene students to communities using our model of community engagement provides students with opportunities to develop a wider range of skills and experiences to draw upon in their professional careers to help them deliver dental care to an increasingly diverse population and in a rapidly changing health environment.

The year 2 module gives students the opportunity to work directly with members of the community who commonly experience poor oral health, and to develop and deliver a project adapted to the needs of the group they work with. The purpose is to provide students with insight into the health and wellbeing of various population groups, and to introduce 'social accountability' as a key part of professional practice.

EBL 1

Brook Green Centre for Learning



Brook Green is a purpose-built school for young people aged 11 - 16 who have cognition, learning, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The school offers a calm and stimulating teaching and learning environment, celebrating the value of all individual students within their school.

The school forms a partnership with parents, carers and students to offer a broad curriculum which matches individual needs. Students achieve various qualifications in a wide variety of subjects with an aim of enabling them to become independent young adults.

Children enjoyed a fun filled morning moving round various oral health themed stations, learning about the importance of caring for their teeth. The students helped to reduce the pupil's anxiety and highlighted links between sugar, diet and poor oral health. The children got to practice brushing techniques, try on PPE and explore healthy food swaps to protect their teeth as well as learning the correct hand washing technique and understanding about infection prevention.



“

Learning how to keep their teeth and gums clean and healthy is really important and this will help the children understand that

”

“

This project will benefit my students supporting their knowledge of dental health

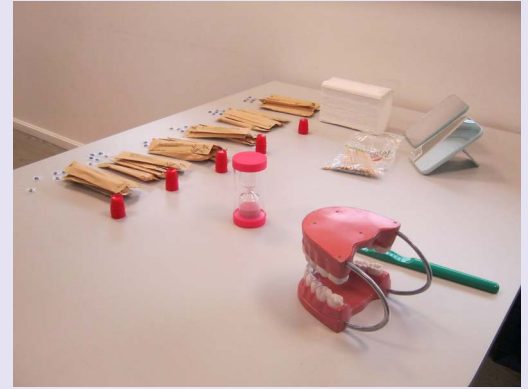
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“

I liked washing my hands and getting rid of the bugs

”



“ This was a really positive experience for our students ”



“ We were very impressed with their communication, engagement, and professionalism both before and during the event ”



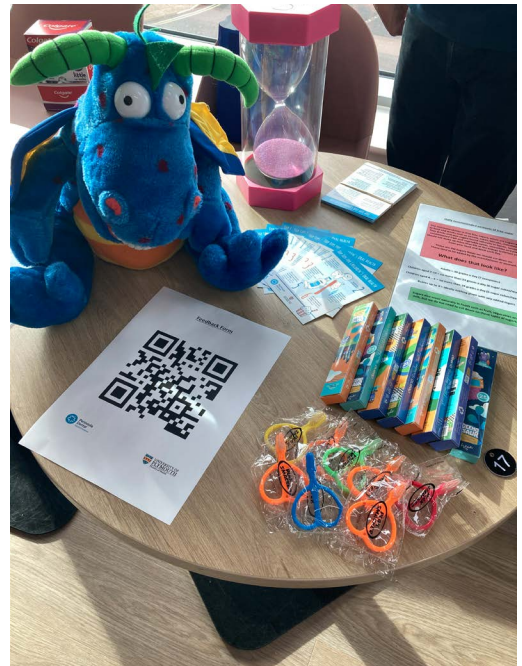


“ Appreciated learning quick tips on how to care for teeth, both in the short and long term ”

“ Those attending were pleased to receive a goodie bag filled with useful dental care items ”

“ They have all been so lovely. They engaged with everyone in a professional, friendly, and compassionate way ”

“ I was very impressed with the students and how they took charge in the session ”



EBL2

Plymouth Argyle Community Trust



Plymouth Argyle Community Trust is the official charity for Plymouth Argyle Football Club. The trust uses football as a tool to work within the local community to raise aspirations, support people of all ages and work with groups who experience multiple disadvantage. They have recently been involved in upgrading the local Brickfields site in Devonport into a new hub for the community known now as Foulston Park. It offers a variety of spaces including updated sports facilities, community spaces, teaching rooms, café and soft play area.

The students spent the day at Foulston Park offering a wide variety of community engagement activities, including a drop in session for parents and carers who attended the soft play area, a pop up information stand for all accessing the centre in the café as well as being able to participate in the 16+ teaching programme for those young people attending training at the centre. They also took part in a local 'walk and talk' with members of the local community sharing key oral health messages in a relaxed, informal and meaningful way during the walk.



“ The community members have a range of dental needs and levels of understanding so enjoyed talking to the students 1:1 ”

“ I never knew about the sugar attacks, that was helpful to know ”

EBL 3

Millfield's Inspired Intergenerational Project



Millfield's Inspired is a charity established and supported by the Millfield's Trust. The innovative intergenerational project is delivered to local primary schools and care homes located within the Stonehouse neighbourhood of Plymouth and allows children and our older community to connect and learn from one another in fun, engaging ways.

Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise's unique primary school programme called Open Wide Step Inside was used by the dental students who designed an interactive craft-based session introducing everyone to the Open Wide Step Inside characters. There was an opportunity to paint character masks, learn about brushing and decorate beakers for the bathroom. Everyone then enjoyed a lunch together where time was spent talking and sharing stories.



“

The students were organised, thorough and were able to adapt and be flexible during the day

”



“ They engaged well with both the elderly residents and children’s needs which were quite diverse ”



“ The residents remarked to me on several occasions how much they enjoyed the session ”



“ These links are crucial to children feeling connected to others, which in turn helps to raise the levels of confidence and aspiration ”

“ The school was thrilled with how it went ”

“ Thank you for helping me, I didn't know I needed to brush my baby's tooth now it's come through ”



“ Great to talk to the students about my baby's teeth, very helpful ”



“ The students were a very friendly and informative group ”



“ The guidance about food, sugar and weaning was really helpful ”



EBL4

Lark Family Hub



Lark provides services to local families through their network of children's centres and family hubs. Working alongside parents, carers and young people aged 0-19 and up to 25 years for those with an additional need, the centres provide help and support on a variety of topics including ante-natal, child development and parenting support. Additionally, they can provide support and guidance on money, debt, housing, benefits, budgeting, health, breastfeeding and weaning, smoking cessation and personal development with a view to accessing employment, training and volunteering.

The students worked in smaller groups to work across two sites in the city, maximising their opportunity to meet and talk with parents and carers. The Butterflies group offers a place for pre walking children where they can stay and play and the parents can talk to staff and other health professionals on a variety of topics. The other group joined parents and carers at a local 'Chatterbox' session where children of all ages can attend to play and access Health Visiting services. Students were able to spend time talking with those attending and answer questions relating to teething, weaning and other childhood behaviours such as thumb and dummy sucking which can affect tooth development.



“ What a lovely group of students who clearly care about their community ”



“ They shared information in an easily accessible and understandable way ”

EBL5

Millfield's Inspired Widening Horizons

Millfield's Inspired is a charity established and supported by the Millfield's Trust. The innovative programme Widening Horizons is delivered to the seven local primary schools located within the Stonehouse neighbourhood of Plymouth and allows children to understand the importance of education and how this can influence their life outside of the school.

Working in partnership with the Millfield's Inspired team the students designed a classroom session for the children of St Peters Primary School, exploring dental careers and opportunities through fun, hands on activities, raising aspirations and acting as role models to the children. Children made playdough models and used Lego to create 'bridges' and 'dentures' and experienced carrying out a dental check-up wearing PPE. Each station allowed the children to talk with the dental students about their training, life at the university and what careers could be available within the dental field, raising aspirations with those children attending.



“
The students designed a fun and engaging session with lots of activities which the children loved
”





“ I liked being a dentist and looking in the mouth ”



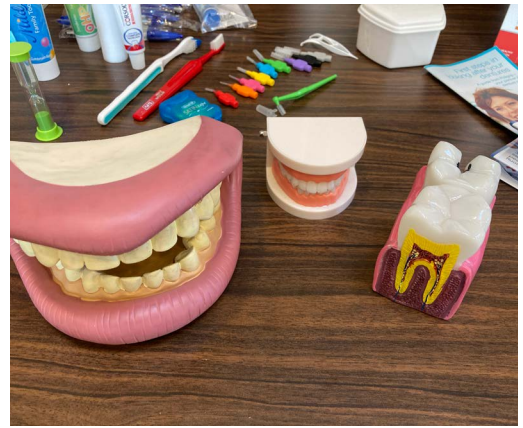
“ Great to inspire our children to think about dental roles ”



“ Such a great opportunity for our young people to experience ”

“ One of the best engagement sessions we've attended ”





“ It has been a great experience for us ”

“ It was a real pleasure to work with these dental students ”



“ The students worked well as a team and all participated, which was lovely to see ”

“ I didn't realise how often you eat sugar affects your teeth ”



EBL6

Elder Tree Befriending Service



The Eldertree Befriending Service supports people aged over 50 who experience social isolation. Currently working with over 1,600 beneficiaries, Elder Tree offers a varied selection of engaging activities close to where beneficiaries live enabling them to form lasting relationships and access sessions with ease. For beneficiaries who are frail, housebound or have multiple vulnerabilities the organisation offers 1:1 support in the home. Along with this 1:1 provision, many groups run by staff and volunteers are available ranging from singing groups, exercise classes, coffee sessions, lunch and supper clubs as well as space for those supporting someone living with dementia to come and have a break.

Students joined a local singing group where they had the opportunity to join in the session, singing a variety of songs with those attending. They also spent time having individual conversations with those attending alongside staff and volunteers. Once the singing had taken place, those attending were encouraged to join the students to talk about oral health. Everyone spent time moving round a variety of dental themed stations focussing on brushing, adaptations that can be made to assist with brushing as well as the impact of sugar and diet.



“ I’ve always rinsed my mouth out, but won’t do that now ”

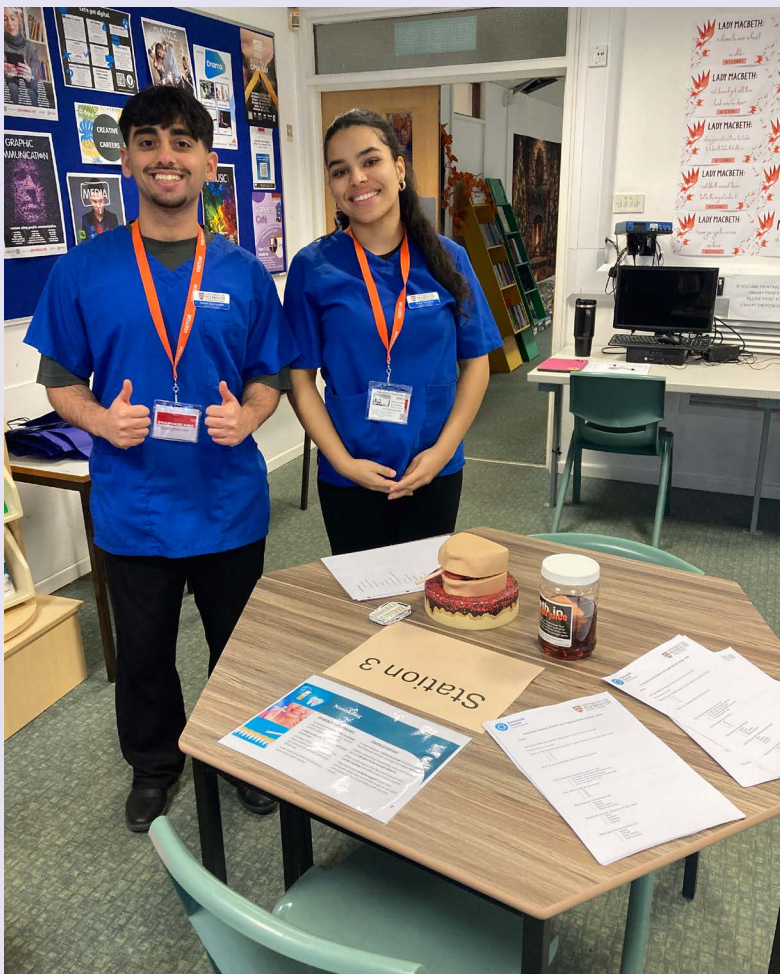
EBL 7

Eggbuckland Community College



Alongside 6 other local secondary schools, Eggbuckland Community College is part of the Westcountry Schools Trust. Working with children aged 11-18 the college supports over 1,200 young people. Built into the curriculum is an opportunity for pupils to experience a wide range of alternative provision. This includes a dedicated careers team, inspiring and motivating pupils to make appropriate options choices when thinking about exams and encouraging them to look ahead to consider potential career pathways. This might be exploring opportunities to go on to university or think about moving into work when leaving the college.

The students met with year 9 pupils who would be making their options choices. Offering a carousel classroom-based session the pupils moved around various areas focussing on different aspects of the dental profession. This provided hands on activities such as carrying out a dental exam on a phantom head and exploring damaging behaviours such as smoking, drinking and sugar on oral health. Students also talked to 6th formers who had a specific interest in entering the dental field to encourage and share their own university experiences.



“ Really enjoyable opportunity, thank you ”





“ Excellent. The students were very warm and nurturing in their interactions with my students ”

“ The 6th form students enjoyed supporting the dental students, a great opportunity for them ”



“ Very informative, the young people liked the interactive activities which kept them interested ”



“ It was helpful to know how to get into university and what I need to do ”

“

They demonstrated ability to deliver age-appropriate dental health messages in a fun and engaging way

”

“

Delivered important health messages in a chatty, conversational and non-judgemental manner

”



“

The students demonstrated thoughtful planning by creating a well-structured session

”

“

Used great resources and demonstrated dental hygiene practices well

”

EBL8

Children in Care Nursing Team

The team of Nurses for Children in Care at Livewell SW comprises of a Named Nurse and Specialist Nurses who aim to improve the health outcomes for all children and young people in the care of Plymouth Local Authority, who can come into the care system with a range of unmet health needs. The team complete initial health assessments resulting in a health plan for each child. Specialist nurses also undertake specific work with any young person in care if there is a need for continuing involvement and intervention, liaising with other professionals working with the young person. They can also continue to work with young people aged 18 to 25 who have left care but who require some additional support with their health.

Students designed an interactive workshop for foster carers, focussing on the importance of mouthcare for children of all ages. Topics included the dangers of sugar, sugar attacks and how best to minimise them, adaptations for special needs including flavourless, non-foaming paste, brushing technique and the importance of fluoride toothpastes. They also considered some of the more challenging aspects of children's oral health such as the use of dummies, thumb sucking, weaning and what to do when a child refuses to brush.



“

Good to hear the simple oral health messages about brushing which we can use

”

DTH A

Highbury Trust



Highbury Trust is an independent charity supporting adults with learning disabilities living in Plymouth. Employing over 50 staff supported by a team of 70 volunteers Highbury support over 500 people in the local community. The centre provides advocacy, supported living arrangements, community support services and life skills. They also have a day centre where members can attend daily to participate in engaging activities, learn new skills and spend time away from home.

The students worked alongside the day centre members to design and deliver a fun workshop focussing on oral health. They spent the morning with members looking at oral hygiene instruction using demonstration models and games, explored a dental appointment through role play and reinforced simple dental top tips using activity sheets with those attending. Closing with a brushing song meant everyone enjoyed the morning and learnt something new.



“ Fantastic - they were engaging and confident in all the sessions they had with us ”

“

They took time to learn about our clients' additional needs in caring for their dental hygiene

”



“

Great to have the students join us for the morning, everyone attending enjoyed the session

”



“

Thank you for coming, it was nice talking to you all

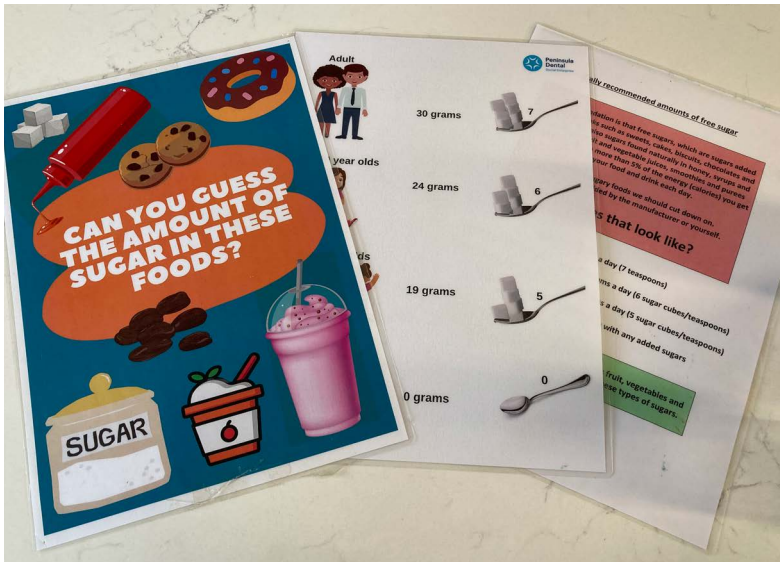
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“

I liked the singing and chair

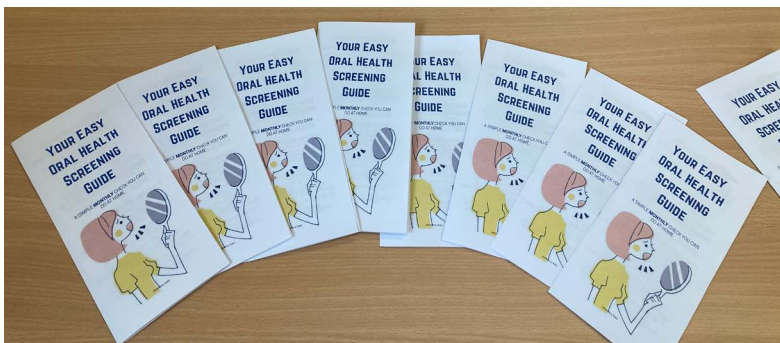
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“ Loved the goody bag, thanks ”



“ Enabled our clients to develop strategies around their brain injury to ensure that the effects of brain injury can be addressed and managed to still maintain good dental health ”



“ Nice to talk to the students about my teeth and how to better look after them ”



“ Excellent session, thank you for coming out to us ”



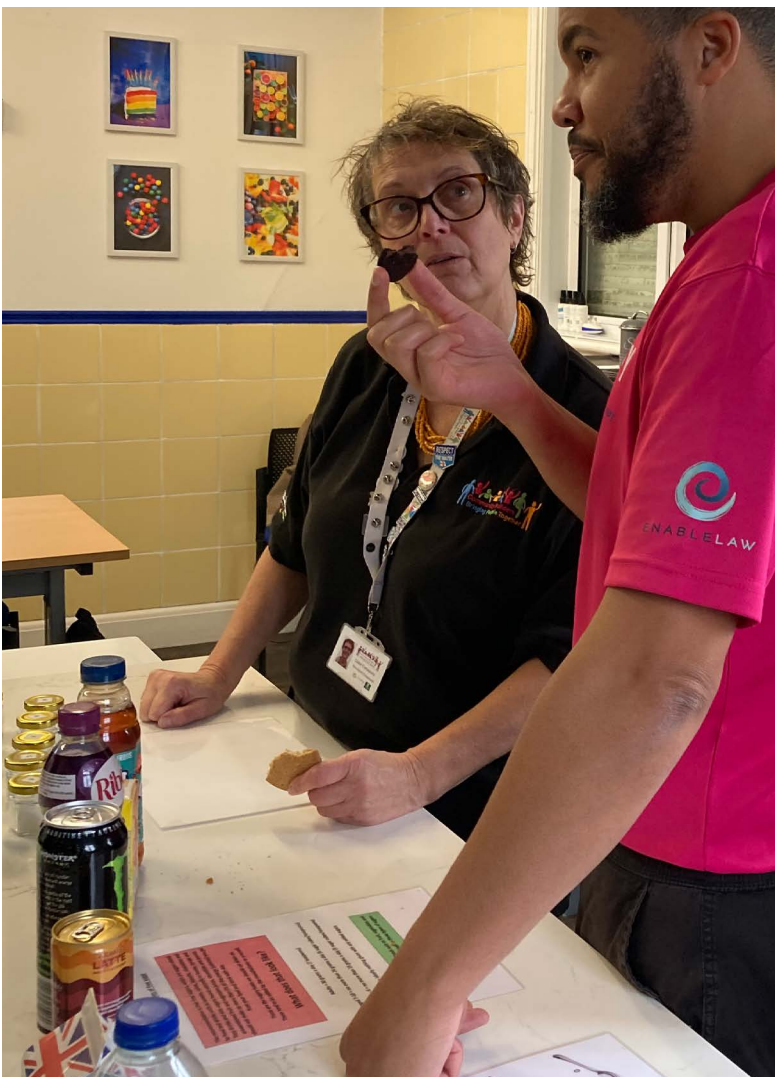
DTH B

Headway and Plymouth Community Builders



Supported by the Community Builders the students connected with Headway Plymouth, a local organisation who offer a warm and welcoming space to support individuals, their family and carers experiencing the challenges of living with a brain injury. People can attend and take part in engaging activities, exercise, participate in learning sessions or simply stay and talk with others who are going through the same thing.

The students designed an engaging carousel activity session for those attending Headway. The areas focussed on diet and sugar, oral hygiene instruction and raising awareness of the importance of mouth cancer checks. Splitting into small groups, participants spent 15 minutes on each area talking to the students and taking part in interactive activities to assist with their messaging.



“ The students had really meaningful conversations with everyone who attended and took time to listen to them ”

DTH C

Shekinah and Plymouth Community Builders



Shekinah is a local charity that supports people facing multiple disadvantages including homelessness and rough sleeping. It seeks to improve health, housing stability, and employment opportunities. They aim to enable individuals to realise their potential and create lasting change. Through a variety of offers including workshops, classroom-based sessions, breakfast drop-ins and mentoring they aim to build confidence and improve health and wellbeing for those who attend.

Supported by the Community Builder the students were able to access Shekinah spending time meeting with those attending the morning breakfast drop-in. Using a drop-by stall approach, they were able to share simple oral health top tips with those coming for breakfast. They took the opportunity to talk about the importance of carrying out self-checks for mouth cancer and what to do if they found something that wasn't normal for them. The group were also able to signpost to appropriate services and leave a range of dental products for those accessing the services to use.

“

It's a great opportunity for me to help connect my community with useful advice about dental hygiene

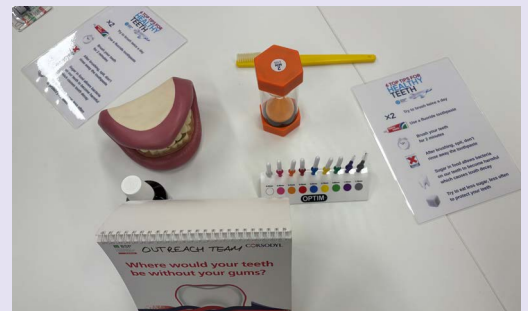
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“ The students showed great flexibility and problem-solving skills ”

“ The brushes and toothpaste were very helpful ”



“ I really enjoy working with the students ”

“ I was impressed by how quickly the group adapted when needed, to meet the needs of their organisation ”

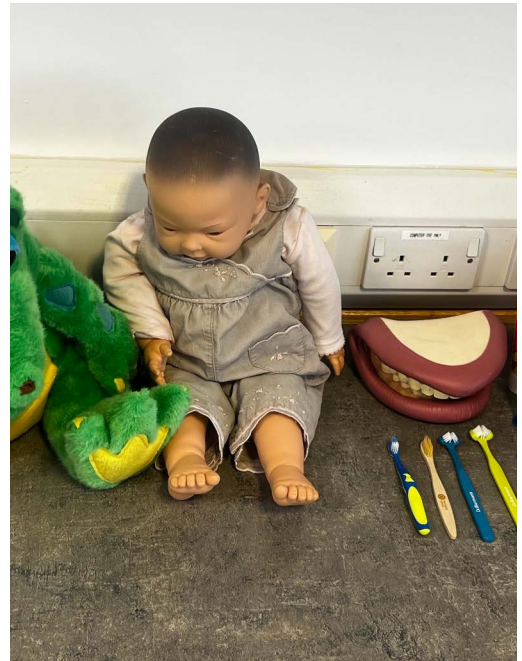




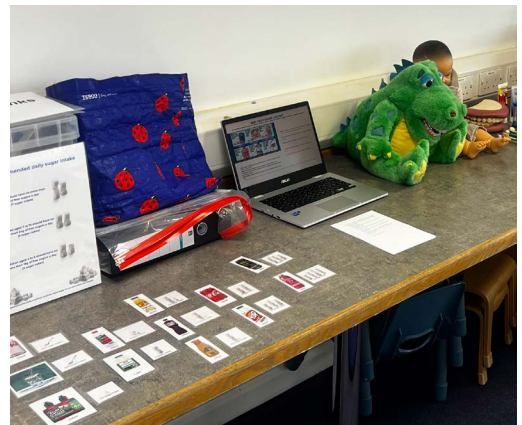
“

SEND children can find brushing difficult, but the students made helpful suggestions which was very beneficial

”



“ The goody bag to take home was really helpful to get our parents started with brushing ”



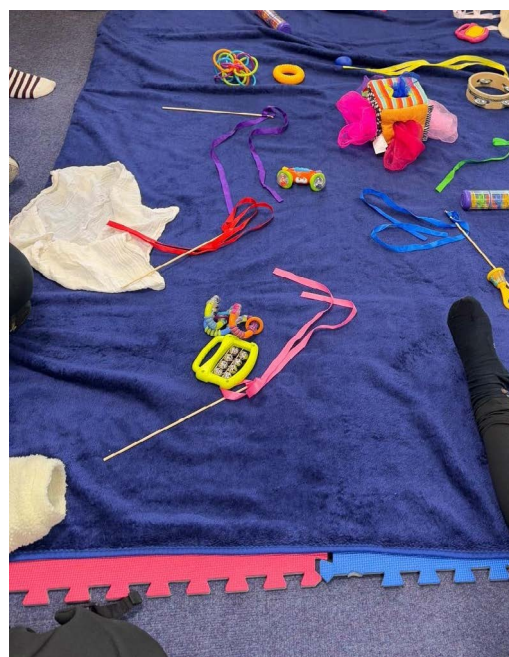
“ Great that the students were adaptable and able to work across two sites to meet more families ”

DTH D Barnardos



Barnardo's Plymouth provides a wide range of services across the city including running a number of children's centres. The centres provide a one stop shop for families from pregnancy to children aged 5, offering support and signposting to a variety of services and professionals for advice and guidance. They deliver a range of fun activity sessions and courses including Baby Milestones group, Chatterbox baby weighing clinics, 'Stay and Play' sessions and Latch-on breastfeeding support. They are also able to support families on a one-to-one basis in the home where necessary, helping with parenting, housing, domestic abuse, finances and budgeting.

Students facilitated two sessions on behalf of Barnardos to raise awareness of the importance of establishing early oral health routines with babies and young children. Working in two smaller groups, the students met with parents and carers in two areas of the city and were able to share tailored information with all who attended. A fantastic opportunity for students to engage with families in an informal setting, having important conversations in a relaxed way with all who attended.



“ Lovely working with the students who seemed genuinely interested in our families ”

“ I’m now more confident talking with children with additional needs ”

“ It has helped me to understand some of the challenges people face and how best to support them ”

“ This project has helped me develop my community engagement and teambuilding skills which will help me when I’m in practice ”

“ I loved this opportunity, so different to anything else we do, but so important ”

“ I now feel more confident with answering any questions a patient might ask ”

“ It’s developed my confidence and made me more passionate to support patients around prevention, including mouth cancer awareness ”

“ I want to do more of this type of work when I graduate ”

“ Great opportunity to work together in a new team and helped me develop my communication skills ”


“ I now understand that sometimes as a clinician you need to tailor your dental advice to the patient based on their needs ”

“ I want to make sure to be mindful of children/patients with special needs and what could benefit them most ”


“ I now feel more confident to ask questions and then provide relevant advice in a non-judgemental way and give patients smaller more achievable goals ”

“ I learnt that everyone has a story. When I meet a patient with similar situation to those I met at our intervention I need to be patient and listen to them, give them time and space ”

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 Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise

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