

**BDA**

British Dental Association

**Beauty  
Banks**

# THE TOOTH HURTS

**SMILES SHAPED BY POVERTY**

THE POOR ORAL HEALTH EPIDEMIC  
IN CLASSROOMS ACROSS BRITAIN  
REVEALED IN A NEW REPORT BY  
CHARITY BEAUTY BANKS IN  
ASSOCIATION WITH THE BRITISH  
DENTAL ASSOCIATION

Grassroots hygiene poverty charity Beauty Banks has teamed up with the British Dental Association (BDA) to understand the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis on the oral health of students and on the role of teachers in classrooms across Britain.

### OUR SURVEY\* OF SECONDARY TEACHERS REVEALED:

# 81%

SAID THERE ARE CHILDREN IN THEIR SCHOOL WHO DON'T HAVE REGULAR ACCESS TO TOOTHPASTE

# 40%

SAID THIS LEADS TO STUDENTS BEING SOCIALLY EXCLUDED BY THEIR PEERS

# 83%

SAY THEY OR THEIR SCHOOL HAVE GIVEN STUDENTS TOOTHBRUSHES AND TOOTHPASTE

# 1 IN 2

SAID CHILDREN ISOLATE THEMSELVES BECAUSE OF ORAL HYGIENE ISSUES

# ONE THIRD

HAVE WITNESSED BULLYING DIRECTLY DUE TO A STUDENT'S ORAL HYGIENE ISSUES

# 25%

SAY CHILDREN MISS SCHOOL AS A RESULT OF POOR ORAL HYGIENE

# 74%

SAID CHILDREN WHO DON'T HAVE REGULAR ACCESS TO ORAL HEALTH PRODUCTS HAVE DISCOLOURED TEETH

# ONE HALF

SAID CHILDREN HAVE NOTICEABLE TOOTH DECAY

# 30%

SAY CHILDREN ARE IN DENTAL PAIN AND 50% HAVE NOTICED THEM SUFFERING FROM HALITOSIS

## **COST OF CLEAN CRISIS**

Beauty Banks, established in January 2018, supports individuals and families in the UK who can't afford to stay clean. "We work with charities including food banks, family centres, domestic abuse centres, homeless shelters and universally - across the board - toothpaste is now our most requested item. Before the Cost of Living Crisis, it wasn't even in the top 3. So we initiated this research with the British Dental Association to fully understand the immediate and long-term impact of a lack of access to fundamental but vital oral hygiene essentials," says Jo Jones, co-founder of the charity.

### **THE BRITISH DENTAL ASSOCIATION**

Tooth decay remains the most common reason for hospital admissions among young children. According to the BDA, tooth decay in children has reached epidemic levels, with any recent gains set to be undone by ongoing access problems and disruption to public health programmes.

British Dental Association Chair Eddie Crouch said: "Our youngest patients face a perfect storm, with millions unable to access care, or even the basics to maintain good oral health. This shocking survey underlines that deep health inequalities are set to widen. Yet while our children face an epidemic of decay, the government seems asleep at the wheel."

The latest NHS dental statistics indicate that just 44.8% of children attended a dentist appointment in the last year, down from 58.7% in 2019/20, a net result of the pandemic disruption.



## TEACHER IMPACT

Unsurprisingly, this oral hygiene crisis creates a more challenging working environment for teachers. *"Our teaching workforce spends a significant amount of time dealing with the impact of poverty on pupils, that they want to spend educating their classes. Hygiene poverty causes not only social exclusion in children but in educational exclusion, too,"* says Beauty Banks co-founder Sali Hughes.

### TEACHERS WHO WITNESS POVERTY IN THE CLASSROOM REPORT:

# 31%

SAY IT AFFECTS THEIR  
MENTAL HEALTH

# 1 IN 4

ARE KEPT AWAKE AT  
NIGHT WORRYING  
ABOUT THEIR  
STUDENTS' WELLBEING

# 38%

FEEL HELPLESS

## TEACHER POVERTY

Severe access problems and the Cost of Living Crisis create a perfect storm for teachers and their students. In August, BBC research in partnership with the BDA found that 91% of practices in England could not take on new adult NHS patients. 79% were not accepting new child NHS patients. While NHS dentistry is free for children and some adults, often based on their benefit status, many on modest incomes have to pay. Dental charges were first introduced to discourage attendance, and nearly 1 in 5 adult patients have delayed treatment for cost reasons, according to the last Adult Dental Health Survey. Dentist leaders are now deeply concerned that current economic conditions and access problems will inevitably see more patients deferring treatment.

*"Nearly every patient coming through is telling us they're feeling the pinch,"* says Paul Woodhouse, a dentist in Stockton-on-Tees. *"We're seeing a spike in last-minute cancellations. Others choose extractions simply because it's cheaper than treatment that could save a tooth. Appointments are hard to come by, but for many on modest incomes, dentistry is becoming a luxury they simply can't afford."*

## **COST OF CLEAN CRISIS**

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### **TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN OUR SURVEY SAID:**

# **45%**

SAY THIS IS BECAUSE  
THEIR LOCAL DENTIST  
ISN'T ACCEPTING NEW  
NHS PATIENTS

# **1 IN 4**

SAY THEY GET ANXIOUS  
ABOUT VISITING THE  
DENTIST BECAUSE OF  
TREATMENT BILLS

# **22%**

STRUGGLE TO  
AFFORD HYGIENE  
BASICS LIKE  
TOOTHPASTE,  
SHAMPOO AND  
DEODORANT

## **MORE THAN TOOTHPASTE...**

**DIGNITY  
SELF-ESTEEM  
SOCIAL  
ACCEPTANCE  
CONFIDENCE  
GOOD HEALTH**



# **TOOTH DECAY NOT OKAY**

## BE A BEAUTY BANKS TOOTHFAIRY

In 2022, as a result of the Cost of Living Crisis, Beauty Banks supported 60% more charity partners than in 2021 and increased its quantity of donation deliveries by 75% to meet demand. Toothpaste and toothbrushes are the charity's most requested items. By donating to Beauty Banks today, you can help support people in the UK living in hygiene poverty.



### DONATE £1

Beauty Banks can supply a school child or teacher with toothpaste for two months.

### DONATE £2

Provides a school child or teacher with a toothbrush and supply of toothpaste for two months.

### DONATE £5

Provides a family of four with a toothbrush each and a supply of toothpaste for one month.

### DONATE £10

Provides a family of four with a toothbrush each and a supply of toothpaste for three months.

### DONATE £25

Provides a classroom of school children and their teacher with a supply of toothpaste each for one month.

### DONATE £50

Provides two classrooms of school children and their teachers with a supply of toothpaste each for two months.

### DONATE £100

Provides three classrooms of school children and their teachers with a supply of toothpaste each for three months.

[DONATE](#)

**TOOTH HURTS CAMPAIGN IMAGERY  
ASSETS AND NOTES TO EDITORS  
PICTURE CREDIT: BEAUTY BANKS**



**MR SOCIALLY  
EXCLUDED BY HIS  
'FRIENDS'**



**LITTLE MISS  
ASHAMED OF HER  
SMILE**



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:  
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