



Stop Caries NOW for a Cavity-Free Future

ACFF ANZ CHAPTER COMMUNITY GRANTS

2020

TITLE: Understanding caregiver promotion of oral self-care and healthy dietary habits for young First Peoples children: Developing a culturally specific oral health promotion model

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DISCUSSION: This research aimed to understand the beliefs and motivations of caregivers' involvement in their young Indigenous children's oral self-care and dietary behaviours: supervising oral hygiene practices and restricting free sugars.

Using a mixed methods approach, this research qualitatively identified caregivers' beliefs, meanings, and thoughts toward the two oral health behaviours and then quantitatively tested a novel theoretical model of behaviour that draws on integrated multi-theory psychological frameworks to determine key mechanisms by which beliefs and motives impact caregivers' involvement in their young Indigenous children's oral self-care and dietary behaviours.

Current findings demonstrated that a combination of reflective (e.g., control beliefs, normative beliefs) and impulsive (e.g., habit) processes are involved in both parental supervised toothbrushing and free sugar restriction, which lends support for the use of an integrated multi-theory behaviour change model to guide the development of future behaviour change interventions.

As the first study to systematically develop and test, in co-creation with the target population, an oral health promotion model, this project addresses the dearth of research for these important child health behaviours and, in addition, provides a much-needed evidence base in this priority area.

This knowledge provides a solid foundation for the development of future interventions aimed at promoting oral and dietary health of First People's children.