

A view of the Industry Dental Prevention Management Activities Inaugural Meeting (see page 47).

産業歯科予防管理活動発足会



Chapter 4

Oral health promotion expands from mothers and children to workplaces and companies

From the start of the 1920s, oral health activities began with a focus on children, then expanded to mothers, then to working women, and finally to adults in general, in various ways and places.

A health fair in Kyoto (right) and the attention-getting mechanized anatomical model (left).



Health fairs gain popularity

A novel idea surprises people

Oral health initiatives targeting housewives and women in general started in earnest in the 1920s when the Schoolchildren's Mass Toothbrushing Drills expanded nationwide. In those days, health expositions featuring photos and specimens with information on disease and health were widely popular, so Kobayashi Co. organized a unique exhibition after careful consideration of what would attract attention. In 1927, an Exhibition of Teeth-related Practices presented documents and drawings related to teeth, from ancient medical books and literature to legends, superstitions, and customs throughout history at the Maru Bldg. in Tokyo. The difficulty of gathering this expensive, culturally valuable material from around the country was rewarded with the show's great success, as the number of visitors, including showings in Osaka, Nagoya, Kyoto, reached 100,000 people. In 1929, an Exhibition for Mothers and Children featuring oral hygiene information that mothers and children should know employed an electric-powered mechanized anatomical model that cost the then-enormous sum of several thousand yen and clearly explained functions of internal organs. It was very well received and later exhibited throughout Japan.



A poster for The First Mother and Child Good Teeth Contest (right), and first-place winners Masako Takamatsu and Hideo (left).

Oral health promotion activities arise after the war

The Mother and Child Good Teeth Contest

After the war, oral health initiatives boomed again because of GHQ's public health policies including new oral health initiatives targeting mothers and children. With 1949 revisions to the Child Welfare Act, the first infant dental checks were carried out, and the idea that "In order to keep a child's teeth healthy, the mother's understanding is essential" was gaining momentum. Accordingly, the Ministry of Health and Welfare*¹ and the Japan Dental Association began to hold Mother and Child Good Teeth Contests beginning in 1952. Lion Dentifrice Co., Ltd. co-sponsored the contests as part of its oral health activities.

For the Mother and Child Good Teeth Contest, local dental associations selected mothers and children with the best teeth, and after regional selection meetings, the final winners were decided. For the second contest in 1953, which expanded to cover the entire country, the Minister of Health and Welfare*² joined the awards ceremony. Afterwards, a grand party was held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Hibiya Public Hall. There, first place winners talked about their childcare experiences, celebrities lectured, a game contest was held, a film was screened, and the hall full of Tokyo high school girls and representatives of various women's organizations filled with laughter.

*¹ Now the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. *² Now the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare.

The Lion Dental Beauty Salon in Yuigahama (right) was elaborately designed. At Hamadera Beach, a popular toothbrushing oral hygiene station was set up under the Super Lion Tower (left).



A dental center appears on the beach

In 1953, television broadcasts and a period of rapid economic growth began. To improve oral health initiatives, Lion Dentifrice Co., Ltd. promoted culture division personnel in charge to augment the oral hygiene division. The former Internal Affairs Department was added to the Dental Hygiene Department to create the new Culture and Education Department, which systematically carried out a wide range of activities related to oral hygiene, from public relations and educational activities to clinical guidance. The department's new projects were strongly supported by the tailwind of a booming economy.

Of particular note is the Lion Dental Beauty Salon, a summer dental center that opened in Yuigahama, Kamakura in 1953. It is difficult to envision now, but the facility's dental checkups and teeth cleaning services for sunbathers were so well received that in the following year, they became regular summer events organized by the Japan Dental Association and sponsored by Lion Co., Ltd. and the Kanagawa Dental Association. The free toothbrushing oral hygiene station was particularly popular, and according to records from 1957, an average of 2,580 people used it each day, and the total number of users that year reached 75,000. Also, a summer-only health center was opened at Osaka's Hamadera beach, one of the biggest resorts in Kansai. A huge tower constructed on the beach in the shape of a Super Lion tube became a big topic of conversation.



Touring instructors visiting a housing estate. The Dandelion Trucks consisted of two hygiene instruction trucks and a power supply truck, called the Flower Truck, Sky Truck, and Fruit Truck, respectively.

Strong and beautiful like dandelions

Mother and child dental health initiatives began with the Dandelion Movement

Further into the 1950s and 1960s, dental health activities related to mothers and children as well as industrial workers began to sprout up one after the other, and still continue to be pillars of Lion's oral health activities. First, in 1959, Lion's mother and child dental health initiatives started in earnest with the Dandelion Movement. The name was chosen to reflect Lion's strong desire for everyone to maintain healthy teeth that were beautiful and strong, like dandelions, and to spread the movement nationwide, like fluffy dandelion seeds blown on the wind. In places such as municipal health centers and housing estates, members of the movement provided toothbrushing guidance for parents and children, dental checkups, and fluoride treatments. Then in 1974, the movement introduced a large oral hygiene promotion vehicle called the Dandelion Truck. Capable of providing instruction to up to 750 groups of mothers and children per day, this truck enabled the movement to scale up activities instantly. At housing estates in Tokyo, most households with children boarded the Dandelion Truck, and it contributed greatly to the dental health of countless people.

In 1986, after 12 years of activity, the Dandelion Truck was replaced by the Dream Truck featuring state-of-the-art equipment that made the group's activities even more effective.

The Cherry Movement aims for people to be bursting with good health, like ripe cherries.



Workplace dental consultations become popular

The Cherry Movement supports working women

In 1961, following the Dandelion Movement, the Cherry Movement began as Japan's first initiative to promote oral health at workplaces. It targeted all working people, but was particularly aimed at improving early awareness of oral hygiene among young women who were able to become mothers. Activities began at the Osaka branch, with movement members touring the workplaces of Kansai Electric Power Co., Ltd. to provide examinations, dental consultations, scaling (removing tartar), etc. These activities proved to be even more popular than expected, with about 130 patients being examined per day per location, for a total of 1,040 patients treated daily at eight different locations. The activities expanded to Nagoya, with tours of companies beginning with Mitsui Bank. Because of overwhelmingly positive reaction from companies and employees, the Industry Preventive Dentistry Management Group was formed, joining companies (among 1,055 participating companies) that were particularly enthusiastic about oral hygiene. Efforts to improve the organization and its programs further expanded the Cherry Movement to workplaces in regions nationwide, leading to the Industry Preventive Dentistry Management initiative which continues to enhance the dental health of working people.



The Lion Family Dental Clinic set up by LDC in Shinjuku Keio Department Store experimented with new ways to relieve patients' anxiety, such as by having practitioners wrap their arms around patients from behind while treating them.

New initiatives for a new era

Activities unified at the Lion Dental Center

Up until that time, the oral hygiene portion of Lion's oral health activities had been carried out in cooperation with the Lion Dental Center (LDC) founded in 1964. But in 1984, the oral hygiene division was integrated into the Lion Dental Center to streamline operations. From then on, the Lion Dental Center has been in charge of all activities, strengthening its commitment to public service.

In 1994, to commemorate the 30th anniversary of its founding, the Lion Dental Center changed its name to The Lion Foundation For Dental Health (abbreviated as LDH). Prominent scholars from Japan and abroad were invited to the 30th Anniversary Seminar, which was held November 26-27 at Tokyo Dental College Chiwaki Memorial Hall. Over 400 dentists who attended heard and made impassioned speeches, and engaged in question-and-answer sessions based on the theme of "The 8020 Campaign, A New Challenge Against Dental Cavities and Periodontal Disease." Also, a memorial reception was held at the Okura Hotel on the first day of the event, bringing together more than 200 people together.

The First Lion New Year Seminar. Thereafter, it was held every January, and the 24th annual event took place in 2015.



From direct instruction to instructor training

Entering the 1990s, in addition to long-running general educational activities such as the Children's Mass Toothbrushing Training and the Dandelion Movement, the Lion Foundation for Dental Health embarked on a new mission: Oral Health Instructor Training.

The first installment of this was the Lion New Year Seminar, an event thereafter held each January beginning in 1992. The seminar aims to improve the skills of dental hygienists, providing detailed introductions to knowledge and skills required by dental hygienists, along with the latest information on oral health. The Japan Dental Hygienists' Association took over the event from the Japan Dental Association starting from 1997 and conducts the Special Research Seminar of the Japan Dental Hygienists' Association Third Lifetime Training System.

Also, in 1993, a veteran dental hygienist from the Lion Foundation for Dental Health started the Nadeshiko Project which holds lectures for school officials and others involved in dental health. This initiative contributes to oral health by providing lectures around Japan such as "The 8020 Campaign," "Chewing and Prevention of Lifestyle-related Diseases," and "Life Skills Education."



A ticket for a performance by The Beatles at the Budokan. The names of the sponsors, Lion Dentrifrice and Lion Fat & Oil, appear on the ticket.

The Advertising King pedigree rules the TV age

● From The Beatles to Lion Housewives Theater

Since the founding of Tomijiro Kobayashi & Co., Lion has always made effective use of the best media of the times, and this ability was apparent at the dawn of the television age in the late 1950s.

In particular, what drew the industry's attention was joint advertising. Lion Dentrifrice Co., Ltd. and Lion Fat & Oil Co., Ltd. jointly sponsored television programs as All Lion. This unprecedented experiment was not acceptable to all at first, but after intense negotiations, a one-hour drama series called "Outlaw" was broadcast nationally in 1962. Then, various popular, highly-rated shows were broadcast, including "The Untouchables", "The Fugitive", "The Wednesday Night Game", and "Lion Housewife Theater". The 1966 Japan concert by the Beatles was also sponsored exclusively by Lion Dentrifrice and Lion Oil & Soap. Not only did the concert at the Budokan have a huge impact — the TV broadcast of it the following day achieved 56.5% viewership (according to research of Kanto region TV viewing), a record that still stands in Japanese television history. Such bold initiatives achieved great advertising results.

Practice the spirit of love

Oral health activities aimed at adults that began in the early Showa era (1926-1989) were full of imagination and originality. In addition to the Oral Hygiene Expo, and Dental Beauty Salons at beaches, all sorts of different projects were carried out in succession, including the full-color educational film, *The Stars are Watching*, the theatrical presentation *Mother and Child Christmas Party*, and the creation of the Oral Hygiene Calendar for dental clinics. These manifestations of Lion's passion for improving people's health perfectly match "Practice the spirit of love" — the company's founding motto.
