

# VCC DENTAL HYGIENE ORAL HEALTH PROGRAM

## Britannia Secondary School LALS Class

Presented by 3rd Year Dental Hygiene Students: Mickey Rematore, An Nguyen, and Amanda Barcelos

### Background

Britannia Secondary School offers a **Learning Assistance and Life Skills (LA/LS)** program for students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities. The LA/LS group is largely composed of males and of Indigenous background.

By conducting surveys & meeting with the community leader, we have curated our program to **explore opportunities in oral health promotion & knowledge:**

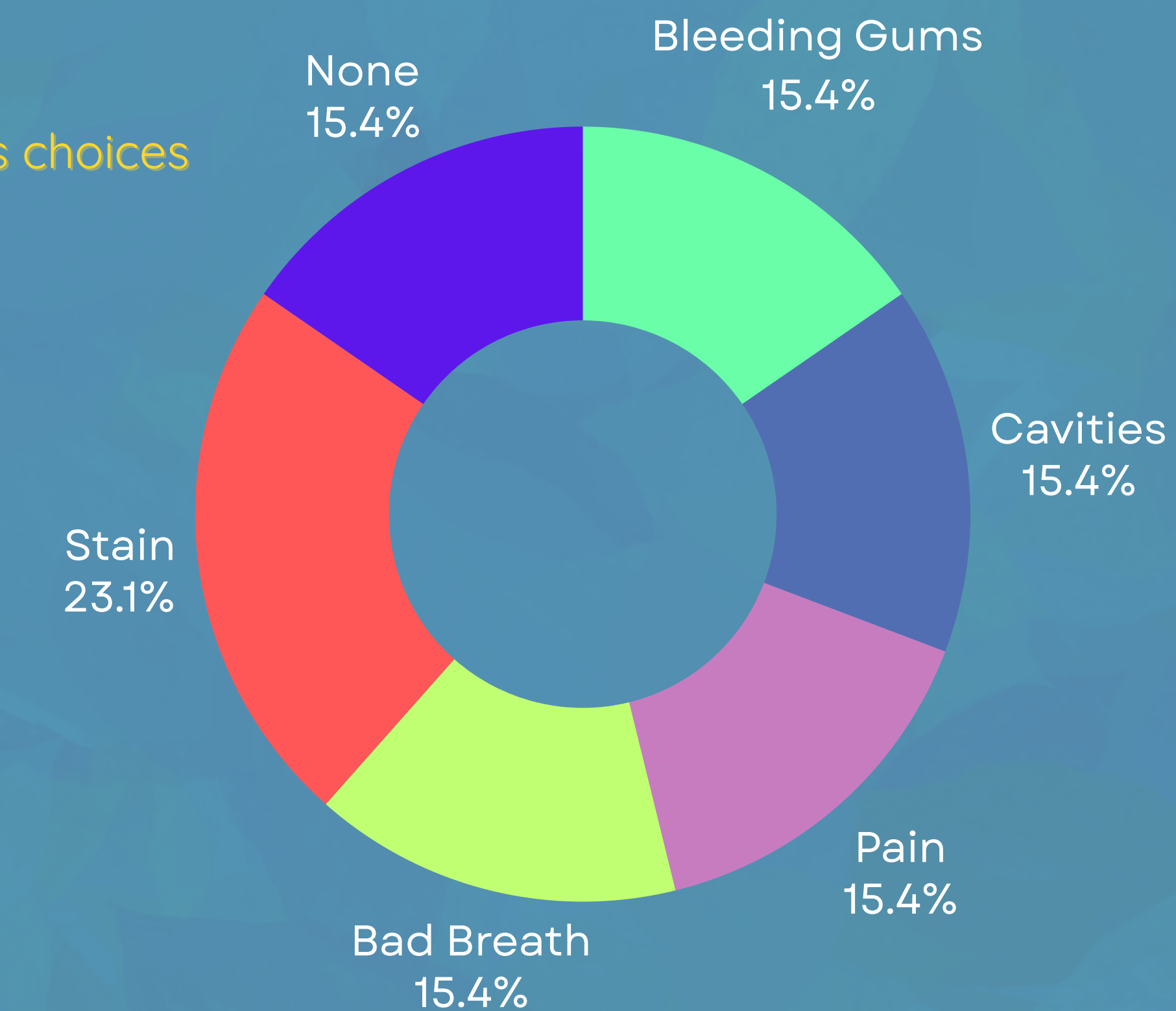
- Promoting mindful eating & nutritious choices
- Building consistent oral health habits
- Enhancing oral health knowledge

50% have experienced **oral pain**

50% have had a **cavity**

37% use floss once a day

88% consume at least 1-2 **sugary snacks or drinks daily**



Donut graph showing students current concerns or questions regarding their oral health

### Program Objectives

- Promote proper oral hygiene instruction
- Increase awareness of link between diet to oral & systemic health
- Equip students with improved oral health literacy
- Increase awareness of when to visit a dental office when they are independent
- Ensure holistic approaches for students with intellectual disabilities
- Provide culturally safe support for the predominantly Indigenous population



### Methods

2 Lessons on Feb 12th & 26th:

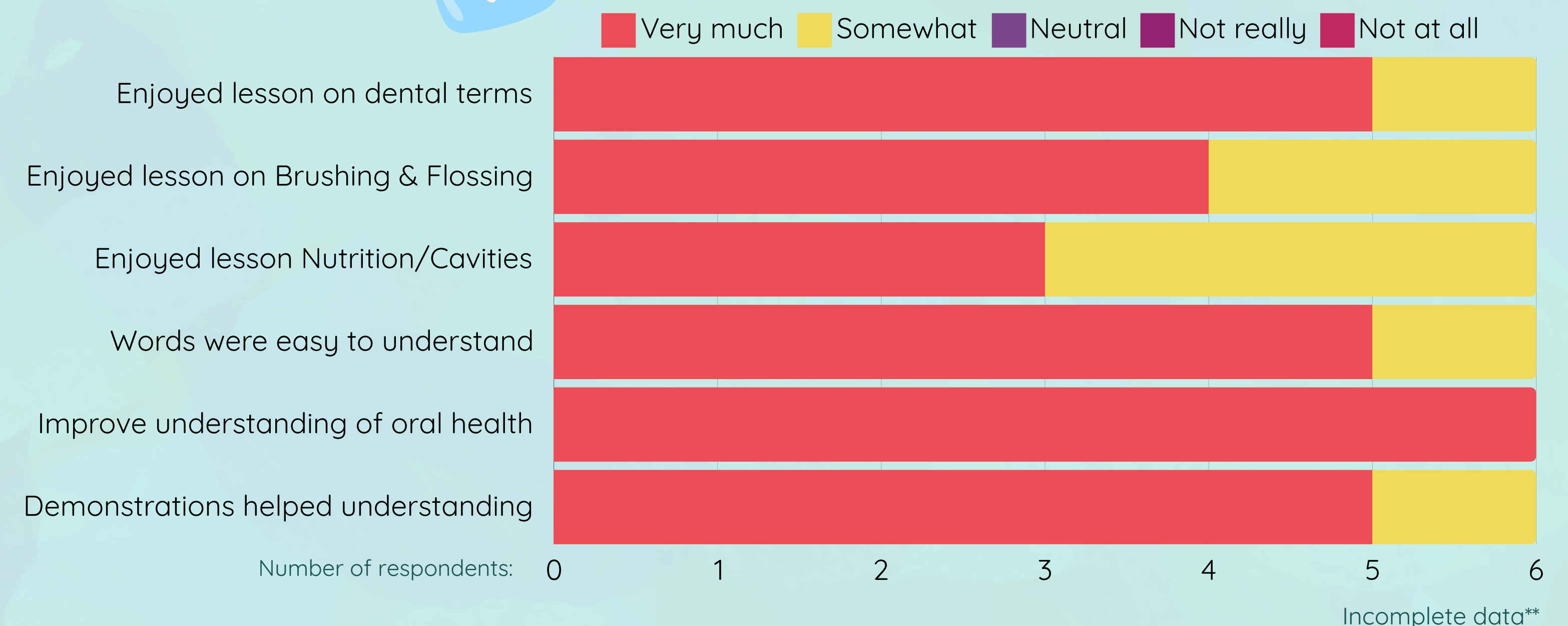
- Basic **Dental Terms** and Proper **Brushing/Flossing** Techniques
- **Cavity** formation & **mindful food choices**



Lessons were based on the following:

- Building **trustful** relationships
- Multiple ways of knowing: culturally relevant **Indigenous Medicine Wheel** showing Diet ↔ physical, emotional, mental, & spiritual health
- Various modes for **increased accessibility**: allowing **time** and **space** for **self-regulation** and choice
- Experiments, videos, demos, **hands-on** brushing/ flossing **activities** in mouth models
- Info in preparation for independence: e.g. **frequency** of having **dental appointments**

### Outcomes





More Outcomes:

- Cost of care delivered: \$25.00
- 15 toothbrushes, toothpastes, floss bundles, mouth rinses (subsidized by VCC/Dental Hygiene program), laminated lesson summaries with pictures & toothbrush calendars were given
- Program Efficacy: Students were able to verbalize material learned & participated by answering & asking questions
- Positive Attitudes: One student said learning to brush & floss was the “best lesson ever!”



Conclusions

- Building rapport & relationships with students is a requirement for effective care delivery
- We have effectively increased awareness of dental health among the students.
- Students are encouraged to take an active interest in their oral care & improve oral hygiene practices as well as food choices.
- The program increased student independence by teaching practical oral hygiene skills
- Visual aids, flexible lessons, and breaks made the program accessible to all learners
- The Indigenous Medicine Wheel made the program culturally safe and relevant



What Works

- Relationships & connections
- Pictures, videos, experiments
- Participation and spontaneity
- More breaks & flexibility
- Positive reinforcement
- Staff participation



What Doesn't Work

- Lecturing with lots of text
- Being too focused on details
- Rigid schedules & scripts
- Focusing on perfection



Future Directions for Future Programs

Maintaining an ongoing partnership with VCC Dental hygiene students to support continued oral health education and programming on an annual basis

Make extra time in the lesson plans for:

- The interaction portion of the lesson
- For students to get back from the breaks



Gauge expectations:

- Interest in the lesson varies by the student
- Be more flexible; we wouldn't do much script-based lecture next time
- The primary goal is Health Promotion



Introverted hygienists need to get out of their comfort zone!

- Building rapport is what makes the lessons effective!
- Find something to connect with the students about; it was often Pokémon or books!



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