

National children's advocate urges Thames residents to vote fluoridation

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National advocate for children Dr Russell Wills is urging Thames residents to vote in support of water fluoridation in this week's referendum.

"I am asking Thames residents to make the right choice for children and vote to keep fluoride in their water supply. It is the best and most cost-effective way to improve the oral health of kiwi children. And it is safe.

"My most important message is that fluoridated water makes a significant difference to our poorest and most vulnerable children.

"I am sure the Thames community wants to see these kids doing well. It might sound like an exaggeration, but it's not; good oral health is often key to a good and successful life. Bad teeth can lead to other health problems, social stigma and issues getting good employment as an adult.

"Fluoridation of the water supply is safe and can make a huge difference to these kids and their future. Surveys show 40 percent less tooth decay on average for children living in fluoridated areas compared with non-fluoridated areas.

"I would like the adults of Thames to think about the impact their vote could have on the life of a child and vote wisely.

"Without the right to vote, children have very little say in how our cities and country are run. So as adults we must make decisions in their best interests, particularly when the impact on the lives of most vulnerable and poorest children is so significant.

"The science is clear and the evidence is clear – fluoridated water makes a difference.

"All the major health and dental organisations in New Zealand and the world agree – including the World health Organisation, Plunket, NZ Dental Association, Cancer Society of NZ, Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons and the US Surgeon General, to name a few.

"So please vote to keep fluoridation in Thames and do the right thing for our kids."

Ends.