ABSTRACT

This is a descriptive study which aims to determine oral health behavior and study the following variables among primary school children (6th grade): socio-demographic factors of students’ parents; psychosocial factors of students; social support of parents; teachers, and friends. The study sample included 200 primary school children (6th grade) 11-12 years old, all in Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand.

The result showed that only 1.5% of the school children had high knowledge about oral health while 63.0% had moderate knowledge and 35.5% had low knowledge. Students had high attitude (44.0%), low attitude (56.0%), and high social support (32.5%), low social support (67.5%). Students had knowledge about the cause of dental disease (73.5%). The majority of students practiced daily toothbrushing (98.5%), the attitude of students about toothbrushing was the prominent preventive factor in oral hygiene (91.5%), more than half of the students (66.0%) knew a toothbrush was for preventing dental diseases. Most students got information about dental diseases from a dentist. This related to the result that every student had been to a dentist (100.0%), half of the students visited the dentist every six months (54.5%), and many had a reason for a check-up (64.0%). The students knew that consuming chocolate was one of the causes of dental caries (83.5%). They knew healthy food for cleaning the teeth (82.5%). Other important factors were parents’ support; reminded for toothbrushing (93.5%), gave information about healthy food for teeth (82.5%), teachers’ support; gave instructions for practicing (95.5%), and information about toothbrushing technique (97.0%), friends support; reminded to bring tooth paste & toothbrush everyday (65.0%), also reminded not to eat a lot of candy (50.5%).

These findings can be used as the basis for finding new ways to improve the dental health practices of school age children in Thailand.