

Lisa Chovin

Nominator: Trisha Simonson

Hello, my name is Trisha Simonson and I would like to nominate my friend and colleague Lisa Chovin for the Dental Hygiene Superhero Award. I graduated with Lisa from SIAST in Saskatchewan in 1998 and she is one of my best friends. Lisa is very passionate about her job. For the last five years, Lisa has worked under contract for Northern Lights Travelling Dental. She travels all over northern Alberta to work at health clinics and schools on First Nations Reserves. All of Lisa's clients are Aboriginal. She started in 2013 with three health centres on three reserves and has since expanded to five health centres and four schools on five reserves. Lisa told me took this unusual position because she really wanted to help people and make a difference. She works away from home during the week, and drives at least 1500 km a week in all sorts of northern Alberta weather on all sorts of crappy roads to deliver services to these remote areas. As there was not a dental hygienist in these places before Lisa worked there, she has created a successful recall system and has established a flourishing hygiene department in these aboriginal health centres. When Lisa started working in the schools, she was kind of thrown in blind as no one had been there before her, either. Since then she created and implemented a very successful school recare system and has been able to provide dental hygiene care to many aboriginal students that would otherwise go without. Lisa loves "her kids" at the schools. She knows all their names, makes note of their hobbies and interests, and seems popular with the kids. She has implemented colouring contests for oral health month, pits grades against each other for no cavity contests, and gives out Clean Teeth Awards every month and makes goodie bags for the winners. Lisa also makes "Dental draws" every month where the winning name gets a special hygiene package that she has made up. (I know she usually just gives them to the kids in most need and doesn't draw names at all). I also know that Lisa goes out of her way to make these goodie bags and hygiene packages really amazing—with her own money. Lisa gets reimbursed for some supplies she buys, but she makes up her care packages with her own money. She really cares about the welfare of "her kids" and I know she worries about them even when she isn't working. These children are often from low social-economic statuses and Lisa is often seen washing their faces and combing their hair as well as cleaning their teeth and doing sealants. When Lisa was in Mexico last month, she was so excited to buy friendship bracelets for her kids back in Alberta. Lisa is also planning a "Go Girl" group in one of the schools next year, for

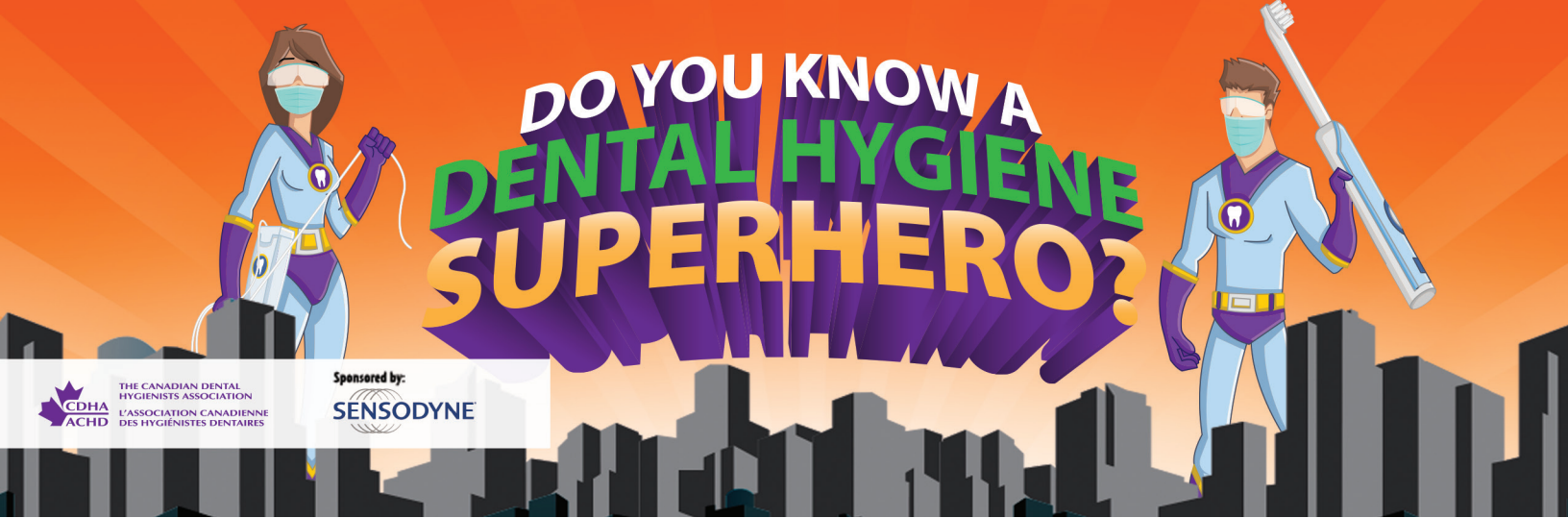


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middle years girls where they can do crafts, activities, and talk about things. She told me her goal is to try to empower young women and she is very serious about being a role model for them. Over the years, I have seen Lisa try very hard to make herself known in the communities as a trustworthy dental professional and has participated in many health fairs, teddybear fairs, and career days. Since Lisa works on commission, she isn't paid to attend any of these events—she goes because she cares. The dentist she refers students to has noticed an increase in the number of kids he is seeing, thanks to her referrals. Lisa also works tirelessly in getting parental consents, reporting neglect, and has even walked patients through the process of getting their Treaty numbers so that they can receive dental care. She also arranged transportation to pick children up at the school for dentist visits—something above and beyond her duties. Lisa also developed and implemented a Treaty Tots Fluoride program for children under age 3. Lisa works very hard at her job and I believe she has made not only a positive difference in the oral hygiene of her clients, but also their lives. And that is why I am nominating her for this accolade. She is making those communities healthier and better places to live for adults and youth alike. I'm proud of my friend!!