

Definition of Dental Neglect

Originating Committee

Child Abuse Committee

Review Council

Council on Clinical Affairs

Adopted

1983

Revised

1987, 1992

Reaffirmed

1996, 2001, 2006

Dental caries, periodontal diseases, and other oral conditions, if left untreated, can lead to pain, infection, and loss of function. These undesirable outcomes can adversely affect learning, communication, nutrition, and other activities necessary for normal growth and development.

Dental neglect is willful failure of parent or guardian to seek and follow through with treatment necessary to ensure a level of oral health essential for adequate function and freedom from pain and infection.