

# Policy on Emergency Oral Care for Infants, Children, Adolescents, and Individuals with Special Health Care Needs

## Review Council

Council on Clinical Affairs

## Latest Revision

2017

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) recognizes emergency care for infants, children, adolescents, and individuals with special health care needs is an essential duty of every dentist. The American Dental Association's Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct states that "dentists shall be obliged to make reasonable arrangements for the emergency care of their patients of record".<sup>1</sup> The AAPD recommends dentists should provide instructions to the parent for accessing emergency care.<sup>1</sup> Availability of after-hours emergency care is an important aspect of continually accessible care.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, when consulted for a dental emergency by patients not of record, the dentist should make reasonable arrangements for emergency dental care. If emergency dental treatment is provided, the dentist should recommend that the patient return to his/her dental home unless the parent expresses a different preference.<sup>1</sup>

This document was originally developed by the Policy and Review Committee and adopted in 1976. This document is an update from the last revision in 2012.

## References

1. American Dental Association. Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct. Available at: "[http://www.ada.org/-/media/ADA/Publications/Files/ADA\\_Code\\_of\\_Ethics\\_2016.pdf?la=en](http://www.ada.org/-/media/ADA/Publications/Files/ADA_Code_of_Ethics_2016.pdf?la=en)" Accessed February 15, 2017. (Archived by WebCite® at: "<http://www.webcitation.org/6tjJRjm6Q>")
2. Brecher EA, Keels MA, Quiñonez RB, Roberts MW, Bordley WC. A policy review of after-hours emergency dental care responsibilities. *J Pub Health Dent* 2016;76(4):263-8.

### ABBREVIATION

**AAPD:** American Academy Pediatric Dentistry.