



## AMERICA'S PEDIATRIC DENTISTS **THE BIG AUTHORITY** on little teeth®



The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) is the recognized authority on children's oral health. As advocates for children's oral health, the AAPD promotes evidence-based policies and clinical guidelines; educates and informs policymakers, parents and guardians, and other health care professionals; fosters research; and provides continuing professional education for pediatric dentists and general dentists who treat children. Founded in 1947, the AAPD is a not-for-profit professional membership association representing the specialty of pediatric dentistry. Its 10,000 members provide primary care and comprehensive dental specialty treatments for infants, children, adolescents and individuals with special health care needs. For further information, please visit the AAPD website at <http://www.aapd.org> or the AAPD's consumer website at <http://www.mychildrensteeth.org>.

### **Vision**

Optimal oral health for all children.

### **Mission**

To advance optimal oral health for all children by delivering outstanding service that meets and exceeds the needs and expectations of our members, partners and stakeholders.

### **AAPD Culture**

Our members put children first in everything they do, and at the highest standards of ethics and patient safety. As such, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry is THE leading national advocate dedicated exclusively to children's oral health. We are the embodiment of our members' expertise as the big authorities on little teeth.

# Little teeth are a big deal

**44%**

of U.S. children will suffer from pediatric dental disease before kindergarten.



**25%**

of children from low income families do not have a dental visit in a given year.<sup>1</sup>



**51 million**

school hours are lost each year to dental problems.



**Tooth decay is the single most common chronic childhood disease.**

**5 times** more common than **asthma**

**4 times** more common than early-childhood **obesity**

**20 times** more common than **diabetes**

About **1 in 5** (20%) children ages 5 to 11 have at least one **untreated decayed tooth.**<sup>2</sup>

*"Help us take care of the children."*

*- Dr. Heber Simmons Jr.*

<sup>1</sup>Larson K, Cull WL, Racine AD, et al. Trends in Access to Health Care Services for US Children: 2000-2014. Pediatrics. 2016;138(6):e20162176

<sup>2</sup>Dye BA, Xianfen L, Beltrán-Aguilar ED. Selected Oral Health Indicators in the United States 2005-2008. NCHS Data Brief, no. 96. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2012.



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## Status of Children's Oral Health

- Dental decay is the most common chronic childhood disease in the United States. Sadly, it also is the most easily prevented.
- Children from low-income families experience a disproportionately higher amount of dental disease than the general child population. 80 percent of all the dental problems in children are found in those 25 percent from lower income groups that often are on public assistance and eligible for Medicaid or CHIP. There is a significantly higher need for dental treatment in black and Latino children.
- Tooth decay can cause impairments such as difficulty eating, speaking, maintaining cognitive focus and controlling behavior. One study found that 17 percent of all missed school days are due to dental pain and infection.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) most recent data on oral health in America indicates that tooth decay declined for children ages 2-5 years from 28 percent to 23 between 2004 and 2012. This is most likely due to the increased number of pediatric dentists who care for this age group and improvements in Medicaid dental programs in some states. However, the majority of Medicaid children still are not obtaining oral health services on a par with those privately insured.
- Approximately 70 percent of pediatric dentists accept Medicaid or CHIP patients, constituting a vital component of the social safety net.

**Studies show that early establishment of a Dental Home (by age 1) reduces subsequent dental disease and treatment as well as related hospital costs.**

**Any children's health insurance plan—Medicaid, CHIP or ACA—should have a robust network of pediatric dentists in order to help the most children.**



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# Children's Oral Health Legislative Issues