



Promoting Oral Health in the Medical Home

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CLINICAL REPORT Guidance for the Clinician in Rendering Pediatric Care

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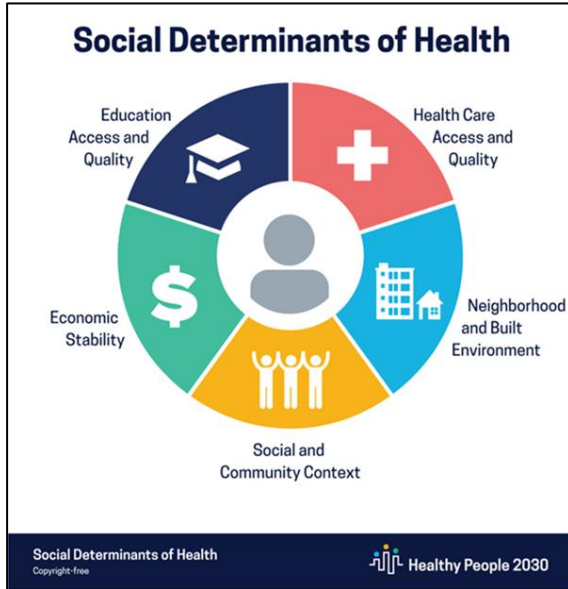


DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

Maintaining and Improving the Oral Health of Young Children

David M. Krol, MD, MPH, FAAP,^{a,b} Kaitlin Whelan, MD, FAAP,^{c,d} THE SECTION ON ORAL HEALTH

Disparities in Oral Health



The Journal of the American Dental Association
Volume 154, Issue 2, February 2023, Pages 113-121

ELSEVIER

Investigation
Caries Risk Assessment

Caries risk and social determinants of health: A big data report

Juan L. Rodriguez MS, Madhuli Thakkar-Samtani BDS, MPH, Lisa J. Heaton PhD, Eric P. Tranby PhD, Tamanna Tiwari BDS, MDS, MPH

The Opportunity Atlas

Which neighborhoods in America offer children the best chance to rise out of poverty?

The Opportunity Atlas answers this question using anonymous data following 20 million Americans from childhood to their mid-30s.

Now you can trace the roots of today's affluence and poverty back to the neighborhoods where people grew up.

See where and for whom opportunity has been missing, and develop local solutions to help more children rise out of poverty.

BEGIN EXPLORING

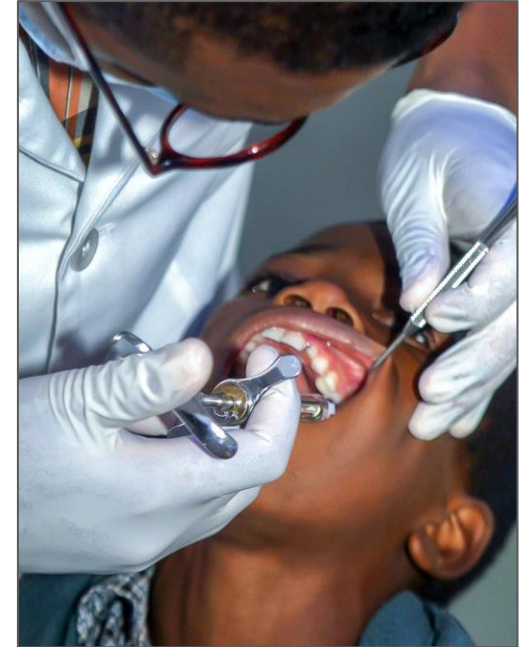
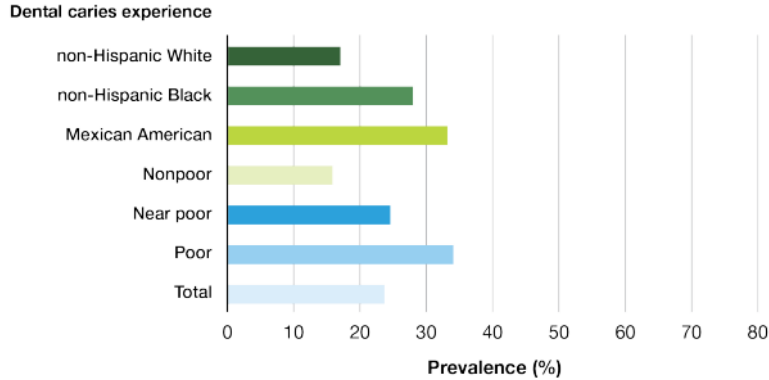


Image: Unsplash

1. Disparities in Oral Health. https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/oral_health_disparities/index.htm
2. Healthy People 2030, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved September 1, 2022, from <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>

Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges

Figure 6. Percentage of children ages 2–5 with dental caries in primary teeth by poverty status and race/ethnicity: United States, 2011–2016

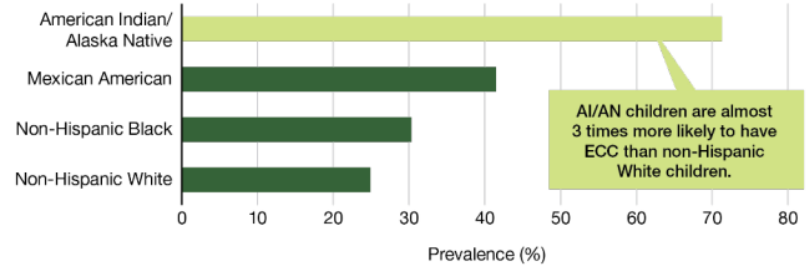


Notes: Dental caries experience (dft > 0). FPG = Federal Poverty Guideline: < 100% FPG = poor; 100–199% FPG = near poor; and > 200% FPG = nonpoor.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019).

The prevalence of dental caries remains greater than **40%** among children 2 to 19 years of age.

Figure 7. Percentage of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children ages 3–5 with early childhood caries (ECC) during 2018–2019 in relation to other same-age children in the United States by race/ethnicity during 2013–2014



Source: Phipps et al. (2019).

1 in 10 preschoolers and **1 in 5** children between 6-11 years old have decay that requires treatment.

1. Krol DM, Whelan K; AAP Section on Oral Health. Maintaining and Improving the Oral Health of Young Children. *Pediatrics*. 2023;151(1):e2022060417
2. Dye BA, MitnikGL, IafollaTJ, Vargas CM. Trends in dental caries in children and adolescents according to poverty status in the United States from 1999 through 2004 and from 2011 through 2014. *J Am Dent Assoc*. 2017 Aug;148(8):550-565.e7. doi: 10.1016/j.adaj.2017.04.013.
3. Holve S, Braun P, Irvine JD, Nadeau K, Schroth R. American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Native American Child Health and Section on Oral Health, Canadian Paediatric Society First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Health Committee. Early childhood caries in Indigenous communities. *Pediatrics*. 2021;147(6):e2021051481
4. Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges. Bethesda (MD): National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (US); 2021 Dec. <https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/oralhealthinamerica>

SC ORAL HEALTH SNAPSHOT



CHILDREN DATA

19.56

19.56% of kindergarten and 3rd grade children have untreated tooth decay¹

12.6

12.6% of Medicaid eligible children received sealants²

42.6

42.6% of Medicaid eligible children and teens aged 1-20 years received preventive dental services³

31.4



31.4% of Medicaid eligible children aged 0-5 years received preventive oral health services⁴

The COVID-19 Pandemic Worsened Dental Access and Inequities


- At the onset of the pandemic, the CDC recommended that dental settings prioritize urgent and emergent needs over elective visits.
- A cross-sectional household survey of almost 350 families in Pittsburgh, PA revealed that **3x as many households reported unmet dental care for children as compared to unmet medical care.**
- Unmet child dental care was more common in households where pandemic-related job or income loss occurred.







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Children, especially those in rural areas, face long waits for dental procedures in ORs

March 1, 2022
Michael D. Webb, D.D.S., M.Ed., and Amr M. Moursi, D.D.S., Ph.D.

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Article type: [Focus on Subspecialties](#)

Topics: [COVID-19](#), [Dentistry/Oral Health](#), [Environmental Health](#)

Children living in rural areas face numerous barriers to dental care, including living in a family with lower income, inadequate insurance coverage and/or having to travel long distances to receive specialty care. In addition, operating rooms (ORs) are not readily accessible in rural areas for dental procedures that require general anesthesia.

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) Pediatric Oral Health Research and Policy Center has sounded the alarm after finding OR space for dental procedures is decreasing. In a nationwide survey of AAPD members, more than 50% reported access to hospital ORs has worsened since March 2020, and 74% indicated that wait time has increased (Vo AT, et al. *Pediatr Dent.* 2021;43:33-41).

Due to these barriers, strategies to improve oral health and access to dental care are important for children living in rural areas.

Most children with cavities can be treated in a dental office. Some, however, require general anesthesia in an operating room because they are unable to cooperate due to young age, extreme fear and anxiety or special health care needs.

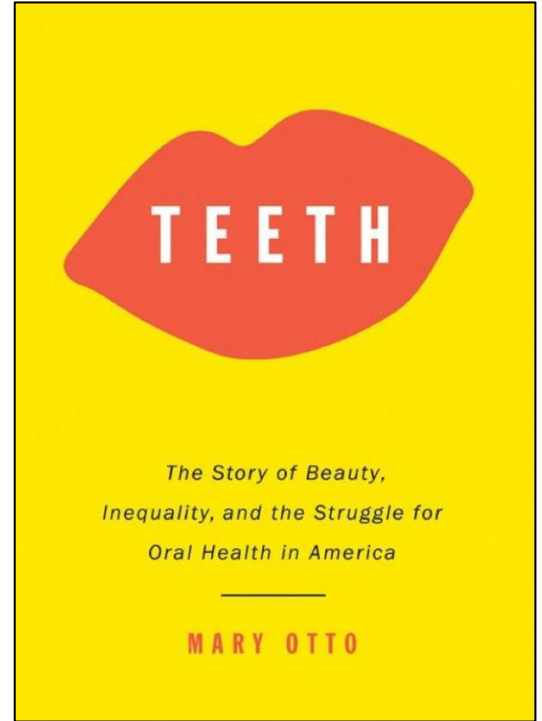
Dental OR Waitlist and COVID

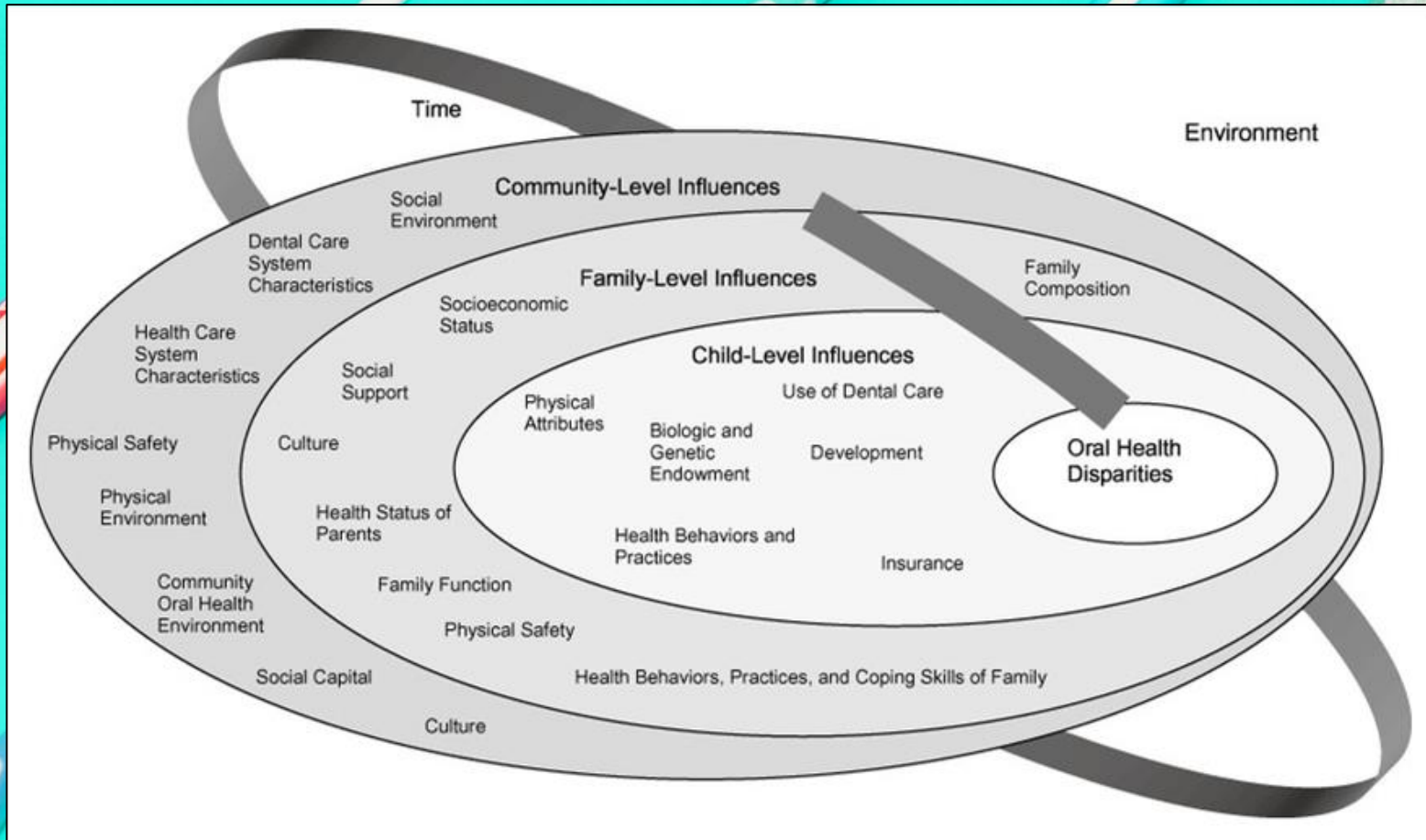
- Increased OR wait time due to OR closure during COVID
- Insurance coverage of dental procedures under general anesthesia
- Oral health inequities deepened

1. Vo AT, et al. Denial of Operating Room Access for Pediatric Dental Treatment: A National Survey. *Pediatr Dent.* 2021;43:33-41
2. Kalash D. How COVID-19 deepens child oral health inequities. *The Journal of the American Dental Association*, (2020), 643-645, 151(9)

“...Dental disease, however grave, has long been overshadowed by the other problems weighing on people living in poverty.. the hardships that shape behavior impact oral health.

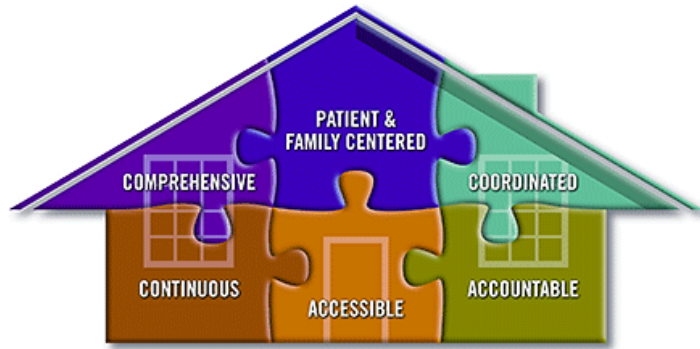
- Excerpt from interview with dentist Edwin Allgair working in southwestern Alaska, featured in Mary Otto's book Teeth





The Medical Home for Oral Health

The Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) model attempts to overcome barriers to fragmented service delivery by providing care that is comprehensive, accessible, patient and family-centered, coordinated, culturally-effective and proactive. A PCMH should address overall health and well-being, including oral health.¹⁻³



- Well-child visit schedules result in 12 medical office visits before age 3.⁴
- Shortage of dentists nationwide comfortable seeing children under 3.⁵
- **Medical providers play a significant role in oral health care interactions in the first 4 years of life.** In 2018, 88% of all visits by age 1 and 52% of all visits up to age 4 for patients with Medicaid took place in a medical home.⁶

1. National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) PCMH Recognition: Concepts. Accessed March 16, 2022 <https://www.ncqa.org/programs/health-care-providers-practices/patient-centered-medical-home-pcmh/pcmh-concepts/>
2. Health systems strengthening glossary. World Health Organization January 2011. Accessed March 16, 2022. https://www.who.int/healthsystems/Glossary_January2011.pdf
3. Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges. Bethesda (MD): National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (US); 2021 Dec. <https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/oralhealthinamerica>
4. AAP/Bright Futures Periodicity Schedule 2021, https://downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity_schedule.pdf
5. Smile for Life <https://www.smilesforlifeoralhealth.org/courses/child-oral-health/>
6. Tranby EP et al. A Cross-Sectional Analysis of Oral Health Care Spending Over the Life Span in Commercial and Medicaid-Insured Populations. JADA 2022; 153(2):101-109. doi:10.1016/j.adaj.2021.07.028

Early Childhood Caries

“Nursing Caries” “Baby bottle tooth decay”

- Can lead to inability to chew food, and to pain and infection.
- Dental pain affecting sleep and QoL
- **Starts in upper front teeth** early in life and progresses **fast** (months)
- 75% of AI/AN children between the ages of 3 and 5 years had ECC, and in many communities, the **caries rate was >90%** (5 times greater than that of the general US child population).
- **Early childhood caries is the single greatest risk factor for caries in the permanent dentition**



1. Dye BA, MitnikGL, IafollaTJ, Vargas CM. Trends in dental caries in children and adolescents according to poverty status in the United States from 1999 through 2004 and from 2011 through 2014. J Am Dent Assoc. 2017 Aug;148(8):550-565.e7. doi: 10.1016/j.adaj.2017.04.013.
2. Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges. Bethesda (MD): National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (US); 2021 Dec. <https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/oralhealthinamerica>
3. Low W, Tan S, Schwartz S. The effect of severe caries on the quality of life in young children. Pediatric Dentistry. 1999 Sep-Oct;21(6):325-326. PMID: 10509332.
4. Phipps K, Ricks TL. The Oral Health of American Indian and Alaska Native Children Aged 1-5 Years: Results of the 2014 IHS Oral Health Survey. Rockville, MD: Indian Health Service; 2015

Patient Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Date: _____
 Visit: 6 month 9 month 12 month 15 month 18 month 24 month 30 month 3 year
 4 year 5 year 6 year Other _____

RISK FACTORS	PROTECTIVE FACTORS	CLINICAL FINDINGS
<p>⚠️ Mother or primary caregiver had active decay in the past 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Mother or primary caregiver does not have a dentist <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Continual bottle/sippy cup use with fluid other than water <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Frequent snacking <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Special health care needs <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Medicaid eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>● Existing dental home <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Drinks fluoridated water or takes fluoride supplements <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Fluoride varnish in the last 6 months <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Has teeth brushed twice daily <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>⚠️ White spots or visible decalcifications in the past 12 months <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>⚠️ Obvious decay <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>⚠️ Restorations (fillings) present <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Visible plaque accumulation <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Gingivitis (swollen/bleeding gums) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Teeth present <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>● Healthy teeth <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

ASSESSMENT/PLAN

<p>Caries Risk: <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> High</p> <p>Completed: <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipatory Guidance <input type="checkbox"/> Fluoride Varnish <input type="checkbox"/> Dental Referral</p>	<p>Self Management Goals: <input type="checkbox"/> Regular dental visits <input type="checkbox"/> Dental treatment for parents <input type="checkbox"/> Brush twice daily <input type="checkbox"/> Use fluoride toothpaste</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wean off bottle <input type="checkbox"/> Less/No juice <input type="checkbox"/> Only water in sippy cup <input type="checkbox"/> Drink tap water</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Healthy snacks <input type="checkbox"/> Less/No junk food or candy <input type="checkbox"/> No soda <input type="checkbox"/> Xylitol</p>
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Table 1. Caries-risk Assessment Form for 0-5 Years Old

Use of this tool will help the health care provider assess the child's risk for developing caries lesions. In addition, reviewing specific factors will help the practitioner and parent understand the variable influences that contribute to or protect from dental caries.

Factors	High risk	Moderate risk	Low risk
<p><i>Risk factors, social/behavioral/medical</i></p> <p>Mother/primary caregiver has active dental caries Parent/caregiver has life-time of poverty, low health literacy Child has frequent exposure (> 3 times/day) between-meal sugar-containing snacks or beverages per day Child uses bottle or non-spill cup containing natural or added sugar frequently, between meals and/or at bedtime Child is a recent immigrant Child has special health care needs^a</p>	<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>	<p>Yes Yes</p>	
<p><i>Risk factors, clinical</i></p> <p>Child has visible plaque on teeth Child presents with dental enamel defects</p>	<p>Yes Yes</p>		
<p><i>Protective factors</i></p> <p>Child receives optimally-fluoridated drinking water or fluoride supplements Child has teeth brushed daily with fluoridated toothpaste Child receives topical fluoride from health professional Child has dental home/regular dental care</p>			<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>
<p><i>Disease indicators^f</i></p> <p>Child has noncavitated (incipient/white spot) caries lesions Child has visible caries lesions Child has recent restorations or missing teeth due to caries</p>	<p>Yes Yes Yes</p>		

^a Practitioners may choose a different risk level based on specific medical diagnosis and unique circumstances, especially conditions that affect motor coordination or cooperation.

^f While these do not cause caries directly or indirectly, they indicate presence of factors that do.

Instructions: Circle YES that corresponds with those conditions applying to a specific patient. Use the circled responses to visualize the balance among risk factors, protective factors, and disease indicators. Use this balance or imbalance, together with clinical judgment, to assign a caries risk level of low, moderate, or high based on the preponderance of factors for the individual. Clinical judgment may justify the weighting of one factor (e.g., heavy plaque on the teeth) more than others.

Overall assessment of the child's dental caries risk: High Moderate Low

1. AAP Oral Health Assessment Tool. https://www.smilesforlifeoralealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Oral_Health_Assessment_Tool.pdf
2. American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Caries-risk assessment and management for infants, children, and adolescents. The Reference Manual of Pediatric Dentistry. Chicago, Ill.: American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry; 2022:266-72.

Maternal Dental Disease and Risk to Child

- Cariogenic bacteria can be transferred from the mother or primary caregiver **to** baby through **saliva** contact.
- The more **untreated cavities** in the **mouth** of the mother, the more likely the child will be have higher levels of bacteria, increasing the child's risk for **tooth decay**.
- Counsel on avoiding premastication of baby food, as well as not cleaning off pacifiers for infant with mouth.



Now, you're brushing for two.

When you're pregnant you may be more prone to gum disease and cavities — and having them can impact your baby's health. Get a dental check-up before delivery.

If you don't have a place to go, ask your healthcare provider for a recommendation and make an appointment today.

Learn more at [HealthyChildren.org/tinyteeth](https://www.healthychildren.org/tinyteeth)

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The American Academy of Pediatric Chiropractic, American College of Chiropractic and Spinal Health Association (AAOCC), American Academy of Chiropractic and Pediatric Chiropractic (AACPC), American Academy of Chiropractic and Pediatric Chiropractic (AACPC), American Academy of Chiropractic and Pediatric Chiropractic (AACPC), and the American Academy of Chiropractic and Pediatric Chiropractic (AACPC) are the official cosponsors of the IOM's Center for the Improvement of Child and Family Health.

1. Berkowitz RJ. Mutans streptococci: acquisition and transmission. *Pediatr Dent.* 2006 Mar-Apr;28(2):106-9; discussion 192-8. PMID: 16708784.
2. Xiao J, Alkhers N, Kopycka-Kedzierawski D, T, Billings R, J, Wu T, T, Castillo D, A, Rasubala L, Malmstrom H, Ren Y, Eliav E: Prenatal Oral Health Care and Early Childhood Caries Prevention: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Caries Res* 2019;53:411-421. doi: 10.1159/000495187

Perceived Parental Barriers to Daily Oral Care

- Perceived early ability to brush independently
 - Assist with teeth brushing until the age of 8
 - Counsel on responsive feeding practices by discouraging bottle propping or letting infant have bottle in crib; encourage scheduled family meal times (AAP Institute for Healthy Childhood Weight)
- Perceived child resistance to brushing
 - Developmentally appropriate behaviors including growing independence
 - Distraction with storytelling, songs, timers
- Skipping when child sick or tired/asleep after outings as times
 - Importance of daily routines, consistency between caregivers (AAP's 5 Rs of Early Literacy)
 - Encourage AAP Brush, Book, Bed Program

The 5 R's
Reading
Rhyming
Routines
Reward with praise
Relationships



1. Smile for Life <https://www.smilesforlife.org/courses/child-oral-health/>
2. AAP Institute for Healthy Childhood Weight. Accessed March 17, 2022 https://ihcw.aap.org/Documents/Early%20Feeding/Responsive%20Feeding/AAP-Responsive-Feeding_Print-Fact-Sheet.pdf
3. Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents 4th Edition by American Academy of Pediatrics. 2017
4. COUNCIL ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, Pamela C. High, Perri Klass, Elaine Donoghue, Danette Glassy, Beth DelConte, Marian Earls, Dina Lieser, Terri McFadden, Alan Mendelsohn, Seth Scholer, Elaine E. Schulte, Jennifer Takagishi, Douglas Vanderbilt, P. Gail Williams; Literacy Promotion: An Essential Component of Primary Care Pediatric Practice. *Pediatrics* August 2014; 134 (2): 404–409. 10.1542/peds.2014-1384

Often Families Receive No Formal Instruction in Correct Brushing

Toothbrushing 101

- Brush after eating, standing or sitting behind the child
- Lift lip and brush along gumline and on both sides of each tooth
- Teach child to spit, not swallow, but don't rinse away toothpaste
- Floss once teeth touch

*Electric toothbrushes and water flossers are great, but can be expensive

(See AAP/Smiles for Life resources for more!)

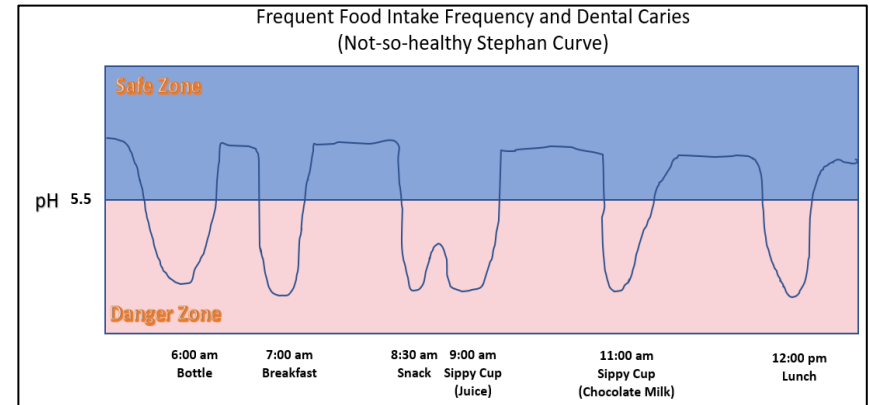
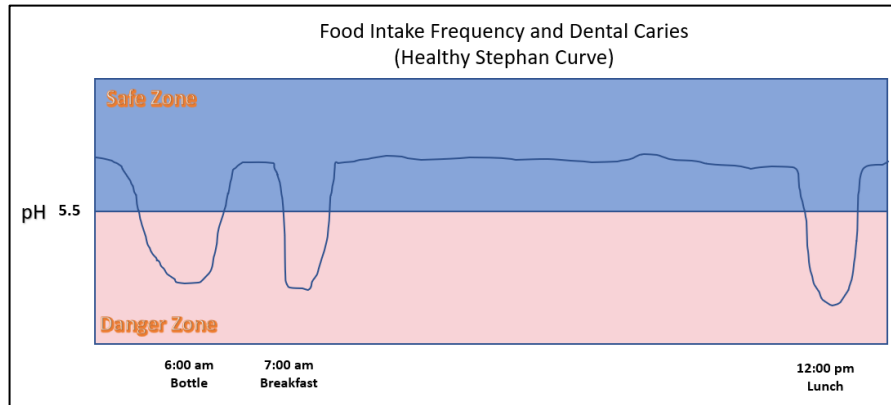
Additional Tips

- Routine is key! Stick to a daily schedule that includes dental care
- Two toothbrushes for mirroring
- Let child watch in mirror
- Take a break if causing tantrums, use a towel or washcloth in interim to wipe teeth
- Visuals to help know how to long to brush teeth - songs, timers, hour-glass, apps

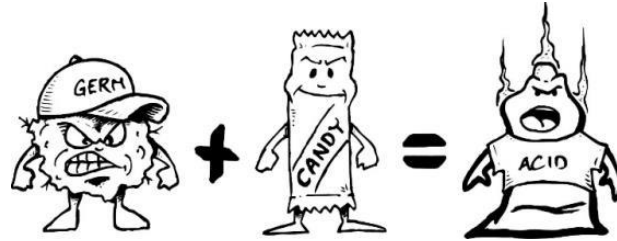


High Frequency Sugar Consumption

- Encourage responsive feeding practices.
- Avoid continuous drinking of sugar sweetened beverage with bottle propping, putting infant to sleep with bottle, letting toddlers walk around with sippy cups.
- Avoid continuous grazing/snacking, especially of highly processed foods.



Access to Healthy Foods



- Highly processed foods don't have the vitamins and minerals teeth need
- Highly processed foods full of sugar and carbs which bacteria turn into acid
- Families experiencing food insecurity often depend on low cost, shelf stable foods and have high prevalence rate of dental caries.



1. Chi DL et al. Socioeconomic status, food security, and dental caries in US children: mediation analyses of data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2007-2008. *Am J Public Health.* 2014;104(5):860-864. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2013.301699
2. <https://drinksdestroyteeth.org/>

Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs are “those children and youth who have or are at risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.”



Both the AAP and the AAPD’s Caries Risk Assessments recognize that having special health care needs is an independent risk factor for caries.

1. Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs. HRSA Maternal & Child Health. <https://mchb.hrsa.gov/programs-impact/focus-areas/children-youth-special-health-care-needs-cyshcn>. Last updated 10/2021. Accessed 5/5/2022.
2. AAP Oral Health Assessment Tool. https://www.smilesforlifeoralhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Oral_Health_Assessment_Tool.pdf
3. American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Caries-risk assessment and management for infants, children, and adolescents. The Reference Manual of Pediatric Dentistry. Chicago, Ill.: American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry; 2021:252-7.
4. Frese W et al. Caries Risk Factors for Primary Care Providers Based on Shared Determinants of Health. American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Pediatric Oral Health Research and Policy Center. May 9, 2016. https://www.aapd.org/assets/1/7/Yr2_Report_Final_Copy.pdf



Dental Care is the Most Common Unmet Health Care Need for CYSCHCNs

- 1 in 4 families with CYSCHCNs report oral health care as the most common unmet health care need, especially restorative care like restorations, crowns and extractions.¹
- CYSCHCNs have worse oral health status than non-CYSCHCNs²
- Poor oral health affects overall health.
 - Studies have demonstrated adverse effects of poor oral health on multiple chronic conditions, including diabetes control.³
 - A 2019 study published in *Pediatrics* concluded that only dental care was associated with a decreased risk of subsequent pneumonia hospitalization in children with neurologic impairment facing high risk of recurrent severe pneumonia.⁴

1. Lang C, Kerr D and Chi D. Preventive Oral Health Care Use for Children with Special Health Care Needs aged 6 through 12 years Enrolled in Medicaid. *JADA* 152(10) 800-812. October 2021.

2. Lydie A. Lebrun-Harris, María Teresa Canto, Pamela Vodicka, Marie Y. Mann, Sara B. Kinsman; Oral Health Among Children and Youth With Special Health Care Needs. *Pediatrics* August 2021; 148 (2): e2020025700. 10.1542/peds.2020-025700

3. Mealey BL. Periodontal disease and diabetes. A two-way street. [published correction appears in] *Am Dent Assoc.* 2008;139(3):252.] *Am Dent Assoc.* 2006;137(suppl):26S–31S

4. Lin J]L et al. Pneumonia Prevention Strategies for Children with Neurologic Impairment. *Pediatrics* October 2019,144 (4) e20190543; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-0543>.

Dental Care is the Most Common Unmet Health Care Need for CYSCHCNs

Barriers to Access

- General dentists lack training/comfort treating this population.¹
- Programs across the country to address this (residency fellowships, HRSA funding, integration into dental school curriculum)
- CYSCHCNs often require a team of healthcare providers. Finding and accessing experts to provide good oral health care can be daunting for parents, especially in rural or underserved areas.²
- Legislative efforts needed that focus on reimbursement rate increases.¹
- Dental billing is procedure based and does not account for medical or social diagnoses.
- Additional strategies needed in order to improve age appropriate at-home oral health behaviors.¹

1. Lang C, Kerr D and Chi D. Preventive Oral Health Care Use for Children with Special Health Care Needs aged 6 through 12 years Enrolled in Medicaid. JADA 152(10) 800-812. October 2021.
2. National Institutes of Health. Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges. Section 2A: Oral Health Across the Lifespan: Children. Bethesda, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, 2021
3. Frank M, Keels MA, Quiñonez R, Roberts M, Divaris K. Dental caries risk varies among subgroups of children with special health care needs. Pediatr Dent. 2019;41(5):378–384 8. Chi DL, Rossitch KC, Beeles EM. Developmental delays and dental caries in low-income preschoolers in the USA: a pilot cross-sectional study and preliminary explanatory model. BMC Oral Health. 2013;13:53



Medical Complexity is Often Combined with Social Complexity

- Higher odds to be living in poverty or in a low-resource neighborhood
- Higher prevalence of ACEs
- Transportation issues: Lack of car, limited access to public transportation, gas money concerns; lack of driver's license if undocumented; difficulty in transporting patient due to wheelchair/medical equipment
- Financial stress and employment inflexibility: Time away from work for frequent appointments, frequent illness, loss of job, unemployment or underemployment.
- Parental stress: Solo parent/caregiver, no childcare, missed school days
- Limited health literacy
- Language barriers



Medical Complexity is Often Combined with Social Complexity

Other considerations specific to dental care:

- Caregivers overwhelmed with other care needs and don't prioritize oral health
- Difficulty brushing may be a battle parents want to avoid
- Limitation of dental providers due to lack of insurance or Medicaid insurance
- Financial limitations to buying basic oral care items



Pediatricians Are Preventionists

In the medical home we can be powerful advocates for our patients' oral health!

- Perform caries risk assessments, apply fluoride varnish, counsel self-management goals, & refer to a dental home.
- Screen for and address the social determinants of oral health.
- Identify local dental services, create / distribute referral lists, handout toothbrushing supplies, etc.

Oral Health Counseling for Pediatric Practices Resources for Providers

[Smiles for Life: A National Oral Health Curriculum](#)
[Child Oral Health Module](#)
[Caries Risk Assessment, Fluoride Varnish, and Counseling Module](#)

[American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Oral Health Resources](#)
[AAP Oral Health Prevention Primer](#)
[AAP Campaign for Dental Health](#)



Education and Training

Support the oral health of your patients through screening, education and referral.



Oral Health Policy Statements & Advocacy

Advocate for funding and payment of preventive oral health to protect children's overall health.

Oral Health Prevention Primer

We all play a vital role in oral health disease prevention.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Oral Health Prevention Primer is designed to help pediatricians and other health professionals address oral health in practice, understand the role of oral health care, and learn how to collaborate and advocate to increase optimal oral health for their community to prevent dental disease before it starts.

How do I...

- Learn more about oral health?
- Assess risk, apply fluoride, and refer?
- Get paid for oral health services?
- Teach other providers about oral health?
- Innovate dental services in my practice?
- Collaborate with others in my area?
- Advocate for patients and providers?
- Provide with emerging research?
- Implement a quality improvement project?
- Educate families?



Protect Tiny Teeth Toolkit

Download this toolkit to raise awareness about the importance of oral health during pregnancy and to integrate prenatal and child preventive oral health services in practice.



Section on Oral Health

Join the Section to connect with oral health advocates around the country and create change through education, policy development, and advocacy.

Oral Health Counseling for Pediatric Practices Resources for Families

Ways to prevent tooth decay in babies, toddlers and preschoolers



OUR COMMUNITY
Preschool children in American Indian and Alaska Native communities are disproportionately affected by poor oral health.

Percentage of Children Under the Age of 5 Who Have Had Cavities:

Race/Ethnicity	2011	2012	2013
White Children	12.1%	12.1%	12.1%
Black Children	18.1%	18.1%	18.1%
Hispanic American Children	14.1%	14.1%	14.1%
Asian Children	10.1%	10.1%	10.1%

Here are Some Steps You Can Take to Care for Your Child's Teeth and Mouth:

- Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste for children under 3 years old.
- Don't use baby bottles after age 1.
- Don't share toothbrushes.
- Visit your dentist regularly for checkups and cleanings.
- Brushed teeth daily with a soft toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.

Milestones for mini mouths

MINI-SONRISAS: METAS Y ETAPAS

RECIÉN NACIDO
CUIDAR SU PROPIA SALUD ORAL

0 TO 3 MONTHS OLD
EMPIEZA A SALIR ESA SONRISA ADORABLE

3 TO 12 MONTHS OLD
EMPIEZA A CEPILLARLOS DOS VECES AL DÍA

1 YEAR OLD
ASÍ COMIENZA DE QUE SU BEBÉ TENGA UNA CITA CON EL DENTISTA AL CUMPLIR SU PRIMER AÑO

American Academy of Pediatrics

MANTENER SALUDABLES LOS DIENTES DEL BEBÉ

Solía pensar que los dientes de los bebés no eran importantes. Pero aprendí que ayudo a los niños a mantenerse sanos y los preparo para tener dientes saludables de adultos.

Aquí le enseñamos cómo:

- ¿CÓMO CUIDAR LOS DIENTES DEL BEBÉ?**
- ¿CÓMO SABER SI LOS DIENTES DEL BEBÉ ESTÁN SALUDABLES?**
- ¿CÓMO SABER SI LOS DIENTES DEL BEBÉ ESTÁN EN PELIGRO?**



Family Resources

The Brush, Book, Bed Guide is a great parent-focused resource that helps establish oral health routines, literacy and a bedtime routine for children. The Brush, Book, Bed Guide can be incorporated into your practice.



Ahora, está cepillando por dos.

Quando está embarazada, el riesgo de desarrollar gingivitis y caries dentales puede ser más alto – y tenerlos pueden afectar la salud de su bebé. Programe una cita con el dentista antes de dar a luz.


Si no tiene un dentista regular, consulte con su doctor para un referido y programe una cita hoy.

Encuentra más información en HealthyChildren.org/letsbrush

Tips to help prevent dental problems during the pandemic

- Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Drink plain milk & fluoridated water.
- Replace salty & sweet snacks with fruits & veggies.
- See your dentist & pediatrician!

American Academy of Pediatrics



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Healthy Living

- Nutrition
- Fitness
- Sports
- Oral Health
- Emotional Wellness
- Sleep
- Growing Healthy

Oral Health

Healthy mouth and teeth are an important part of a child's wellness. Adding a dental professional as a resource to your support system can provide ongoing peace of mind for your entire family.

Featured Article

Good Oral Health Starts Early

Brushing teeth starts in childhood, and the good oral health habits established in the United States, and from the first tooth to get underway. There are habits you can start now to keep your baby's teeth healthy and when the first tooth shows up, there are only your pediatrician can tell if healthy, see them in our new book!

View

Articles



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