



# Georgia Smiles for School Nurses

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## INSIDE:

Volume 2, Issue 2

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**THE LINKS:**  
**ORAL HEALTH & Birth outcomes**  
  
**THYROID Awareness**

2



January celebrates two very important health months: **National Birth Defects Prevention Month** and **Thyroid Awareness Month**. February, of course, is **National Children's Dental Health Month** and **American Heart Month**. What do all four of these health issues have in common? They are all part of the **oral health-systemic health connection**. Restating the wise words of Surgeon General (Ret) C. Everett Koop, *"You can't have good*

*health without good oral health"*. As we learn more about the connection, it makes it all the more important to teach and promote oral health. School nurses and teachers have the perfect opportunity to do both as you see the children on a day-to-day basis and up close! You can make a difference! **Healthy Smiles are Happy Smiles!**



**THE LINK:**  
**ORAL HEALTH & the Heart**

3

**ORAL HEALTH FACT SHEETS AVAILABLE for Special Needs**

3

## National Children's Dental Health Month

The first celebration of Children's Dental Health took place on February 3, 1941 in Cleveland, Ohio. That same year, Akron, Ohio designated February 3rd–7th as their Children's Dental Health Week.

On February 8, 1949, the American Dental Association (ADA) held the first nation-wide observance of Children's Dental Health Day and in 1955, the celebration became a week-long event. It became a month-long observance in 1981 and now is known as National Children's Dental Health Month.

Now, millions of people all across the United States and at numerous armed service bases abroad participate in Children's Dental Health Month celebrations.

For resources, activities, and more information contact the American Dental Association\* (<http://www.ada.org/2934.aspx#campaign>), the American Dental Hygienists' Association (<http://www.adha.org/oralhealth/index.html>), Kidstuff (<http://www.adha.org/kidstuff/index.html>), and Oral Health Initiative, a program of the American Academy of Pediatrics (<http://www.aap.org/oralhealth/ncdhm.cfm>).



**ORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE Excerpts:**

4

- **Oral Hygiene: Perception VS Practice**
- **Seal 2 Million!**
- **Less Benefit in Bottled Water**
- **Pedo Oral Health Online Training Program**

**BE THE BEAT! Teach TEENS CPR in SCHOOL**

5

**CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH Activities & Resources**

6



\* A list of ADA activities can be found on page 6.

## The Link: National Birth Defects Prevention Month

Gingivitis and periodontal disease are infections that can be detrimental prior to and during pregnancy. Any infection can cause birth defects, preterm labor, or illness in the unborn baby.

*Fusobacterium nucleatum*, has been linked to premature births and stillborn infants. It is found in periodontal (gum) infections and not genital or uterine infections. It is very uncommon in the vaginal tract. With periodontal disease, there are more bacteria in the mouth. The number can increase by as much as 10,000 times causing gums to bleed. More bacteria in the mouth can mean more in the bloodstream.

During pregnancy, the immune system slightly relaxes so as not to cause the baby harm. When this happens, more bacteria is allowed to grow. A bacteremia (blood infection) can result which may target the placenta and amniotic fluid to trigger pre-term birth or cause stillbirth.

Periodontal disease is preventable by maintaining good oral hygiene. If you are considering becoming pregnant and even if you're not:



- Be sure to visit your dental professional at least twice a year
- Floss your teeth daily
- Brush after eating
- Use a dentist/hygienist recommended antiseptic or anti-plaque mouthrinse
- Eat a balanced diet

**Expecting? Don't Neglect Your Teeth** (PR Newswire - November 23) <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/expecting-dont-neglect-your-teeth-110132554.html> Dentists can provide safe, effective, and essential treatment for combating the effects of oral disease during pregnancy. Pregnant women can experience gingivitis, pregnancy tumors, and gingival enlargement, according to an article in *General Dentistry*. "Although bleeding and inflammation of the gums has been noted in all trimesters of pregnancy, it typically disappears 3 to 6 months after delivery, provided that proper oral hygiene measures are implemented," says lead author Crystal L McIntosh, DDS, MS. Conditions such as gingivitis and gingival enlargement can worsen as the pregnancy progresses if proper oral hygiene is not initiated prior to or during pregnancy. Pregnant women should maintain their regular, semi-annual checkups and consult a dentist if they notice any changes in their oral health.

## The Link: Thyroid Awareness Month

Oral health care professionals screen for undiagnosed thyroid disease when performing head and neck exams. School nurses and teachers can also be alert for symptoms in children. Children may have inherited thyroid problems or may develop them later on. Some medications can block thyroid hormone production. Problems may result from diets deficient in iodine. Although found in milk, seafood, and added to some salts, a child who is lactose intolerant or doesn't use iodized salt during meals, may not get the necessary amount.

A child with symptoms of **hyperthyroidism** (too much thyroid hormone) may have **trouble concentrating** or feel **irritable**. They may have faster heartbeats, sweat a lot, have difficulty sleeping, or trembling hands. They may have a really good appetite, yet suffer from weight loss or fail to gain weight as they mature. Some may appear to be staring all the time with eyes very wide opened or eyes that appear to bulge.

With **hypothyroidism** (not enough thyroid hormone), a child may often **feel tired** and **lack energy**. They may be cold intolerant and feel uncomfortable when the room temperature is fine for everyone else. They may also have slower heartbeats, brittle and less hair, and dry pale yellowish skin. They may grow more slowly, yet gain weight more easily. Puberty changes may not show up until they receive treatment.

Children with these symptoms should be referred to a physician for evaluation. It may not only **make all the difference in their scholastic achievement**, it may save their lives! [http://kidshealth.org/kid/health\\_problems/glandshoromones/thyroid.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/health_problems/glandshoromones/thyroid.html)

## The Link: American Heart Month

Good oral health is related to good heart health. One can never be too young or too old to improve their brushing and flossing habits as well as eating healthier. **Oral bacteria can play a part in heart disease** by entering the bloodstream from unhealthy and bleeding gums. Not only can these bacteria cause heart infections, they can also lead to heart attack and stroke from blockages due to their accumulation in the arteries. The American Heart Association has lesson plans and activities for the classroom, the gym, a NFL Play 60 Challenge, and information on CPR in schools. [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Educator/Educator\\_UCM\\_001113\\_SubHomePage.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Educator/Educator_UCM_001113_SubHomePage.jsp)

## Special Needs Fact Sheets for Providers and Caregivers

[http://www.dental.washington.edu/departments/omed/decod/special\\_needs\\_facts.php](http://www.dental.washington.edu/departments/omed/decod/special_needs_facts.php) On this website are fact sheets developed by a group of experts affiliated with the University of Washington and the Washington State Department of Health - Oral Health Program and include 14 mild to moderate manifestations of special needs conditions. They have been developed for Dental Professionals, Medical Professionals & Parents and Caregivers.

Conditions highlighted include: **ADD/ADHS, Anxiety/Depression, Asthma and Allergies, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Cerebral Palsy, Cleft Lip/Palate, Congenital Cardiac Disorders, Diabetes, Down syndrome, Eating Disorders, Epilepsy, Hearing Impaired, HIV, and Traumatic Brain Injury.** Each selection includes 3 fact sheets, for dental and medical professionals, as well as parental information with recommendations and web addresses for resources.

Additional guidance sheets include dental, medical, and child abuse guidance for dentists.

## Your County Health Department's School Dental Program



Your health department has an "In-School" dental program especially for children without access to care and those who are left without a safety net by some of the "other" dental programs. Our program can provide oral screenings, cleanings, dental sealants, and fluoride treatments regardless of ability to pay. We would be happy to visit your school!

If one of your students should have an emergency or just need a dentist, the health department dental clinics are available.

**You can be a part of helping these children receive the care they need!** To reserve an appointment:

**For program contact information:**

<http://health.state.ga.us/pdfs/familyhealth/oral/oralhealthcontacts.pdf>



## Excerpts from the Oral Health Initiative Newsletter

### Survey Finds Oral Health is a Priority in Perception, not Practice (PR Newswire - December 6)

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/national-survey-finds-oral-health-is-a-priority-in-perception-not-practice-111376104.html> According to a nationwide survey of 1008 adults, Americans place a high value on the importance of oral health and hygiene, yet there is room for improvement when it comes to practice.



Findings suggest that consumers have good intentions of taking care of their oral health but need **more education and motivation** to follow through with standards of care. Approximately **97% of respondents agreed that oral hygiene is as important as or more important than physical health** when it comes to leading a healthy lifestyle, and 90% claimed that they brush twice a day. However, less than half brush admitted that they brush their teeth for the two minutes recom-

### Oral Health America Supports Preventive Dental Care (Dentistry IQ - November 30) [http://www.dentistryiq.com/index/display/article-display/4681897745/articles/dentistryiq/industry/2010/11/oha-at\\_gnydm.html](http://www.dentistryiq.com/index/display/article-display/4681897745/articles/dentistryiq/industry/2010/11/oha-at_gnydm.html)

Oral Health America has launched their **Seal Two Million Campaign**, committing to seal two million teeth for over 500,000 at-risk children by 2020. "It is almost unimaginable to many Americans that there are children in our communities who **go to school unable to concentrate** because their mouths are hurting from untreated tooth decay," says Beth Truett, president and CEO of Oral Health America. "The Seal Two Million Campaign reflects our intention to expand the impact of our programs, and represents our commitment to ensuring that all children and families get the dental care they need." Oral Health America reached its previous goal, to provide 1 million dental sealants for more than 225,000 children by 2010.



### The Tooth About Bottled Water (KIMT.com - November 15) <http://www.kimt.com/content/localnews/story/The-Tooth-About-Bottled-Water/4gbIemjclK2uemkKH0lvnw.csp>



Bottled water is often a healthy alternative to other sugar-sweetened and high caloric beverages. However, many bottled waters **do not have fluoride**. "If you've been more prone to cavities in the past you're going to want to seek out sources to have that fluoride in contact with your teeth to try and prevent future cavities," says Dr Matt Hansen. Adults usually get fluoride by brushing several times a day with fluoride toothpaste and mouth rinses, Children drinking bottled water could lose the developmental benefits of fluoridated water. Teeth are still forming and developing until approximately age 12, and fluoride is essential to that process. These children could be missing out on key nutrients to build and strengthen their teeth for a lifetime. There are fluoride containing bottled waters on the market and parents can look for it at their grocery store. Parents can also make sure their children are drinking water daily from the sink tap and brushing on a regular basis. (For a list of brands of bottled water containing fluoride: <http://www.bottledwater.org/fluoride>)

### Protecting All Children's Teeth (PACT): A Pediatric Oral Health Training Program



<http://www.aap.org/oralhealth/pact/index.cfm> Protecting All Children's Teeth (PACT): A Pediatric Oral Health Training Program is a 13-chapter module that aims to educate pediatricians, pediatricians in training, and others interested in infant, child, and adolescent health about **the important role oral health plays in the overall health of patients**. Topics include **dental development, fluoride, and oral injury**. It includes interactive tools such as roll-over definitions, chapter photo galleries, and self-assessment pages. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians and designates for this educational activity a maximum of 11.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Users will receive 11.0 CME credits for answering 75% of the PACT Post-Test (42 of 56 questions) correctly.

## Be the Beat! Teach Teens CPR in School

American Heart Association Advisory issued January 10, 2011

### Secondary Students Should be Required to Receive CPR Training,

**"Don't Just Stand There!"** The American Heart Association is helping create the next generation of CPR lifesavers at <http://bethebeat.heart.org>. This website teaches teens the basic skills of CPR and the use of an AED. The website features games, educational videos, and interactive quizzes. It also includes songs with 100 beats/minute to help teens remember the correct rate for chest compressions when performing CPR.



#### Advisory Highlights:

- CPR training and an overview of automated external defibrillators should be required for high school graduation, according to an American Heart Association advisory.
- Such mandatory training would rapidly increase the number of people ready to respond to sudden cardiac arrest, a leading cause of death in the United States.

DALLAS, Jan. 10, 2011 — All secondary school students should be required to be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and receive an overview of automated external defibrillators (AEDs), according to an American Heart Association science advisory.

The advisory, published in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*, calls for state legislatures to mandate that CPR and AED training be required for graduation, and to provide funding and other support to ensure the educational standard is met.

Last school year, 36 states had a law or curriculum standard encouraging CPR training in schools, according to the advisory. School districts have developed various models for providing and paying for the training and equipment, including using volunteer instructors or video-based programs, and drawing support from businesses, foundations, civic organizations and public agencies.

Challenges include finding time in the curriculum to teach the courses and providing and maintaining CPR manikins, which are vital for training. Schools can keep reusable manikins, replacing key parts for sanitary reasons, or can work with a local agency that provides manikins and training. Some schools provide personal training kits that include DVD-based instructions and an inflatable, reusable manikin.

The statement authors report that the benefits far outweigh the costs. "Training of all secondary education students will add a million trained rescuers to the population every few years," said Mary Fran Hazinski, R.N., M.S.N., co-author of the advisory and professor at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing in Nashville, Tenn. "Those students will be ready, willing and able to act for many years to come, whenever they witness an emergency within the community."

Students trained as rescuers might help save lives at home, where most sudden cardiac arrests occur. Trained students could also respond to cardiac arrests at school and at public places such as malls, health clubs, or swimming pools, or at events such as family reunions.

"Getting people to act when someone suffers sudden cardiac arrest is critical to the victim's survival," says Dr. Michael Sayre, chairman of the American Heart Association's Emergency Cardiovascular Care Committee. "Time is not on the victim's side. Four to six minutes is the window of opportunity for someone to act before it is too late."

For the entire advisory: [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/News/News\\_UCM\\_001145\\_SubHomePage.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/News/News_UCM_001145_SubHomePage.jsp)

## Fun Activity Sheets for Kids from the ADA website

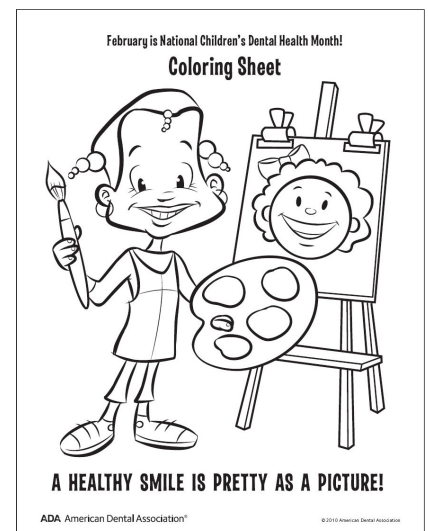
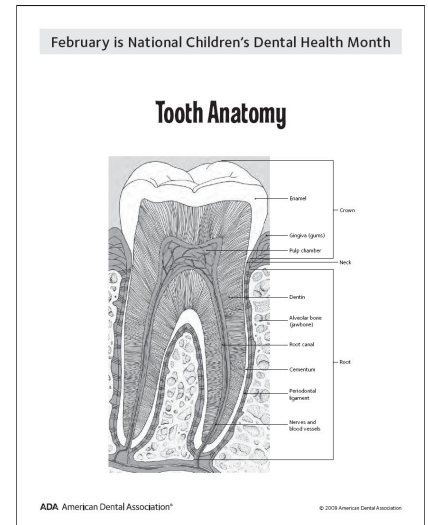
Check out these **games, puzzles, cool coloring sheets and our smile calendar**. Print out the collection and grab your markers! You'll be on the road to a healthy smile in no time.

1. Math Maze Activity (English and Spanish)
2. Tooth Anatomy (English and Spanish)
3. How to Floss (English and Spanish)
4. How to Brush (English and Spanish)
5. Connect Four Board Game (English and Spanish)
6. Crossword Puzzle (English and Spanish)
7. Finish the Picture Activity (English and Spanish)
8. A Wacky Visit to the Dentist Activity (English and Spanish)
9. Secret Message Activity (English and Spanish)
10. Find the Sentence Activity (English and Spanish)
11. Buck McGrinn and Den Smiley Coloring Sheet (English and Spanish)
12. Gen Smiley Coloring Sheet (English and Spanish)
13. Buck McGrinn Calendar (English and Spanish)
14. Healthy Smile Certificate (English and Spanish)

### Full Sets of Activity Sheets

1. The full set of Activity Sheets in English (PDF/1.5MB)
2. The full set of Activity Sheets in Spanish (PDF)
3. Guidelines for Usage of the 2011 NCDHM Slogan in English (PDF)

**Classroom Ideas and Resources** <http://www.ada.org/387.aspx>



## Oral Health Objectives 2020 (3 out of 17)

- OH HP2020-6:** Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents who have dental caries experience in their primary or permanent teeth.
- OH HP2020-7:** Reduce the proportion of children, adolescents, and adults with untreated dental decay.
- OH HP2020-10:** Increase the proportion of children who have received dental sealants on their molar teeth.

<http://www.healthypeople.gov/hp2020/Objectives/TopicArea.aspx?id=38&TopicArea=Oral+Health>



**YOU CAN HELP! Partner with your Health Dept. School Dental Program!**