



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

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February is National Children's Dental Health Month: The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Urges Parents to Keep Little Teeth Healthy

CHICAGO (February 5, 2020) — As the leading authority on children's oral health, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) is a proud and strong supporter of this month. According to an AAPD national survey, only one in four parents are taking their child to the dentist by his or her first birthday, the age recommended by leading health experts, which means that children's teeth are at risk.

Delaying children's oral health care routines can cause tooth decay, aka "Mouth Monsters," possibly resulting in compromised health, development and quality of life. Tooth decay is one of the most prevalent childhood health concerns, but is entirely preventable. This is why it's imperative to fight off dental diseases even before the appearance of the first tooth, and schedule children's first dental appointments by their first birthday.

"To avoid Mouth Monsters, like Tooth D.K., Tartar the Terrible and Ginger Bite-Us, ensure your child is brushing their teeth twice a day and flossing as soon as the teeth touch," said AAPD President Dr. Kevin Donly. "It's also important for parents and caregivers to find a dental home and utilize available resources at <https://mouthmonsters.mychildrensteeth.org/>, where you can find an abundance of information on keeping your child's teeth cavity-free."

Childhood tooth decay is the #1 chronic disease among children. Although the prevalence of tooth decay has decreased, nearly one in five children under the age of 5 has experienced tooth decay. Parents of children with special needs face a unique challenge as their children are at a higher risk of developing oral health conditions. On average, special needs patients represent 12 percent of the caseload of a pediatric dental practice.

[According to a study](#), 81 percent of children with special healthcare needs require some kind of preventive dental care, and dental care remains the most frequently cited unmet health need for children with special healthcare needs.

Tooth decay is 100 percent preventable, so be sure you are taking care of your children's teeth by daily brushing/flossing, finding a dental home and using resources available at mychildrensteeth.org.

About the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry is the recognized authority on children's oral health. As advocates for children's oral health, the AAPD promotes evidence-based policies and clinical recommendations; 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 10,500 members provide primary care and comprehensive dental specialty treatments for infants, children, adolescents and individuals with special health care needs. For further information, visit the AAPD website at <http://www.aapd.org> or the AAPD's consumer website at <http://www.mychildrensteeth.org>.