Oral Health Resources
For Children & Adolescents

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

A Guide to Oral Health Services
for Philadelphia’s Children and Adolescents
INTRODUCTION

Cavities are the most common preventable disease among children and is five times more common than asthma. Tooth decay has been called a “silent epidemic” by the U.S. Surgeon General, who stated that more than 50 percent of America’s children have tooth decay. Each year, children lose more than 51 million school hours due to pain and illness related to tooth decay.

The good news is that tooth decay is preventable and treatable by practicing good oral health habits at home and by seeing a dentist regularly.

In Philadelphia, there are many dentists and other oral health providers available to serve children. Look on pages 7 - 14 for a list and map of some of their offices.

For a more complete list of dentists, you can call your insurance plan for more information. The phone number is on your health insurance card.

Medical Assistance is required by law to provide free dental care to all children insured by Medical Assistance. In Pennsylvania, children insured through the Children’s Health Insurance Program or CHIP also get dental care for free. Even without insurance, help is available.

www.pccy.org
WHY DO I HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF MY CHILD’S BABY TEETH?

Baby teeth are very important! Baby teeth first appear at about 5 to 7 months of age. Most children will start losing their baby teeth when they are 5 or 6 years old. By 11 or 12 years old the last baby teeth will fall out. Baby teeth are replaced by permanent teeth. Baby teeth are important because:

- Baby teeth help your child chew and eat solid foods.
- When learning to talk, baby teeth help children pronounce different sounds and speak clearly.
- Baby teeth hold the space for the permanent teeth that follow after the baby teeth are lost. When baby teeth are lost too soon, other teeth may shift into that space, or the permanent teeth may grow in crooked or crowded.
- An infected baby tooth can destroy a developing permanent tooth.
- Healthy teeth are important for your child’s appearance and self-confidence. Missing teeth, decaying teeth or bad breath can lead to your child getting teased by other children.
- Baby teeth are important to the overall health of a child. Mouth and tooth pain can disrupt sleep and keep kids from eating and drinking and they may stop growing. Untreated dental infection can result in illness and missing school.

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HOW DO I TAKE CARE OF MY CHILD’S BABY TEETH?

Begin cleaning baby teeth as soon as they appear, and be sure to clean the gums too! Use a soft cloth or a child-size toothbrush to clean away food after every meal and at the end of the day. Using a soft-bristled brush and water, move the brush back and forth gently and be extra careful around the tender gums - and don’t forget to brush the tongue!

WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD FIRST SEE A DENTIST? - AND HOW OFTEN AFTER THAT?

The American Dental Association recommends taking children to the dentist around their first birthday. This gives dentists an opportunity to spot the beginnings of tooth decay and teach parents how to care for their child’s teeth. At the first visit, the dentist will help your child feel comfortable by allowing him or her to sit in the dental chair, touch certain instruments, and by counting teeth and completing a simple exam.

The best way to guarantee a healthy smile is to build a relationship with a dentist to care for your children. The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends a dental check up at least twice a year for most children. Your dentist can help you decide the best schedule for your child to follow.

QUESTIONS YOU MAY WANT TO ASK YOUR DENTIST OR ORAL HEALTH CARE PROVIDER:

- How long have you been practicing?
- Can I schedule an appointment for my child so I don’t have to miss work?
- At what age do you take x-rays? (X-rays should first be taken at 3 or 4 years old or sooner if the dentist sees any problems).
- How do you work with a child who doesn’t sit still? (The dentist should discuss different options such as: tell-show-do, positive reinforcement, laughing gas, sedation in the office, or general anesthesia in the operating room).
HOW DO I GET DENTAL CARE SERVICES FOR MY CHILD?

1) Get your child health insurance.
   Call Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth at 215-563-4828 x17 for help with insurance for your child. If your child is not eligible for health insurance, look at the list on pages 8-14 for places that accept uninsured children.

2) Contact a dentist or oral health provider in your neighborhood to schedule an appointment.
   See pages 8-14 of this guide for a map and partial list of dentists in the City. The list in this guide includes larger practices that accept Medical Assistance. To find other dentists, please call your HMO’s member services. Their phone number is on your health insurance card or see pages 19-20 for the phone numbers.

WHAT IS TOOTH DECAY AND WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

Tooth decay starts with bacteria or germs naturally found in the mouth. The bacteria form “plaque” - a sticky film that covers the teeth. These bacteria change the sugary and starchy food we put into our mouth into acids. The acids then cause tooth decay and can make holes in your child’s teeth which are called cavities or caries.

WHAT ABOUT PUTTING MY BABY TO BED WITH A BOTTLE OF FORMULA, MILK OR JUICE?

When your child is sleeping, the sugar in the bottle of formula, milk or juice collects around your child’s teeth and can cause serious tooth decay. Most experts agree that babies should not go to sleep with a bottle of milk, formula or juice. Putting water in your baby’s bottle while sleeping will not harm your baby’s teeth.
HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILDREN BRUSH THEIR TEETH?

Until your children are seven or eight years old, you'll need to help them brush their teeth. Use a soft toothbrush, and once your child turns two, use a pea-sized dab of fluoride toothpaste. Even when your children start brushing on their own, they will still need you to supervise until they turn 7 or 8. As long as you're standing there, why not pick up a brush and join your kids? Foaming at the mouth together is fun, and your children will pick up on your good habits!

WHAT IS FLUORIDE?

Fluoride is a mineral added to Philadelphia’s drinking water and is found in most toothpaste. Fluoride makes teeth stronger and helps slow the growth of bacteria that causes cavities.

The American Dental Association and the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry don't recommend using fluoride toothpaste until your child is two years old, and then you should only use a pea-sized amount, making sure your child spits it out and doesn't swallow it.

COULD MY CHILD BE GETTING TOO MUCH FLUORIDE?

Young children who swallow large amounts of fluoride toothpaste can develop fluorosis, which leaves harmless but unsightly white patches on teeth. Fluorosis only strikes teeth that are still forming under the gums, so it mostly affects children age between 6 months and 5 years. If you're careful about using only a pea-sized portion of toothpaste and make sure your child doesn't swallow, your child will probably not get fluorosis.
DOES MY CHILD NEED TO FLOSS?

Children need flossing as soon as they have two teeth that touch together. Many children under 6 will need help. After your child’s teeth are brushed, wrap the floss tightly around two of your fingers, and guide it between your child’s teeth using a gentle rubbing motion.

WHAT ARE DENTAL SEALANTS?

Dental sealants are thin, plastic coatings “painted” on the teeth that form a shield over your child’s back teeth that help prevent cavities. Getting sealants put on is a simple and painless procedure; they last up to 10 years. Most dentists will offer to put sealants on when your child’s back teeth or molars appear at around age six.

WHICH SNACK FOODS ARE TOOTH-FRIENDLY?

The best snacks for a healthy mouth are low in sugar and starch. That’s because sugar and starch mix with bacteria (germs) in your mouth to make acids. Over time, the acid eats away at the teeth, leading to tooth decay and cavities. Starchy and sugary foods like candy, soda, pretzels, crackers, and raisins are more likely to leave bits of food that stick to the teeth and make plaque.

The good news is that if you brush your teeth or even rinse your mouth after eating crackers, raisins, and other sticky snacks, you get the benefits of a nutritious snack and cut the risk of cavities.

Mouth-Healthy Snacks

- carrot sticks and other raw vegetables
- plain yogurt
- cheese
- nuts (such as almonds and walnuts)
- fresh fruit (such as grapes, apples, oranges, bananas)

Snacks to Avoid

- soda
- juice
- candy
- potato chips
- raisins and other dried fruits
Where to Find Dental Health Centers

Where to Find Dental Health Centers

Key to Charts on Following Pages

AC = Americhoice, HP = Health Partners, KM = Keystone Mercy, AT = Aetna, KHPE = Keystone Health Plan East

Many of the practices also take private insurance. Call to see if they accept your plan.

**The Elwyn Dental Clinic is scheduled to open in spring, 2007.

^These offices only provide services to individuals with special health care needs.

+Phoneline = District Health Centers provide translation for all languages via phone service.
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Finding A Dentist For Your Child
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<td>39</td>
<td>Gentle Dental</td>
<td>1335 W.Tabor Rd. Suite 150, 19141</td>
<td>(215) 548-8080</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>Trieu &amp; Trieu, D.M.D., P.C.</td>
<td>6536 Woodland Ave. 19142</td>
<td>(215) 727-3773</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>District Health Center #9</td>
<td>131 East Chelten Ave. 19144</td>
<td>(215) 685-5738</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>No Fee</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>District Health Center #2</td>
<td>1720 South Broad St. 19145</td>
<td>(215) 685-1822</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>No Fee, Spanish and Vietnamese Phonenumber Limited care</td>
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<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Gentle Dental</td>
<td>1507 W. Passyunk Ave. 19145</td>
<td>(215) 468-0220</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>Dentex Dental Group</td>
<td>1701 Moyamensing Ave. 19148</td>
<td>(215) 462-4047</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Family Dental Center at Snyder Avenue</td>
<td>626 Snyder Ave. 19148</td>
<td>(215) 334-4900</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>Peach Dental</td>
<td>640 Snyder Ave. 19148</td>
<td>(215) 334-4845</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Limited care</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Thomas H. Lam, D.M.D.</td>
<td>1611 S. Broad St. 19148</td>
<td>(215) 271-6999</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>Absolute Smile</td>
<td>6722 Bustleton Ave. Suite 101, 19149</td>
<td>(215) 331-7585</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Phone #</td>
<td>AC</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>District Health Center #10</td>
<td>2230 Cottman Ave. 19149</td>
<td>(215) 685-0608</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>A-1 Family Dental Care P.C.</td>
<td>8001 Roosevelt Blvd. Smylie Times Bldg. Suite 503, 19152</td>
<td>(215) 268-9655</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>A-1 Family Dental Care P.C.</td>
<td>8355 Loretto Ave. Suite 104, 19152</td>
<td>(215) 342-5750</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>A-1 Family Dental Care P.C.</td>
<td>8539 Bustleton Ave. 19152</td>
<td>(215) 342-5740</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Hart M. Dixon, DDS Dental Clinic</td>
<td>111 Elwyn Rd. Elwyn, PA 19063</td>
<td>(610)-891-2320</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*This insurance information is accurate as of November, 2006. The types of insurance plans dentists accept can change over time. Call the dental office to see if it accepts your insurance.

**Insurance Key**

AC = Americhoice, HP = Health Partners, KM = Keystone Mercy, AT = Aetna, KHPE = Keystone Health Plan East

Many of the practices also take private insurance. Call to see if they accept your plan.

**The Elwyn Dental Clinic is scheduled to open in spring, 2007.**

^These offices only provide services to individuals with special health care needs.

*Phoneline = District Helath Centers provide translation for all languages via phone service.
HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT MY CHILD FROM GETTING TOOTH DECAY AND CAVITIES?

Remember, there are several important steps you and your child can take:

1. Brush your child’s teeth twice a day. Use fluoride toothpaste after your child turns two years old.

2. Floss his/her teeth daily.

3. Eat a well-balanced diet and limit between-meal snacks.

4. Visit your dentist twice a year for cleanings and oral exams.

5. Get dental sealants placed on your children’s back teeth.
SPECIALTY SERVICES: BRACES

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD NEEDS BRACES?

Sometimes teeth don't grow in evenly. Your child’s teeth might be crooked or his/her upper and lower jaws might not be the same size. Your dentist may notice a "bad bite" and recommend that you see an orthodontist to determine whether your child needs braces. For children with Medical Assistance, the orthodontist has to prove the braces are medically necessary. The CHIP program does not cover braces. The dental clinics at Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania offer discounted braces on a payment plan. For more information on how to find an orthodontist, see the following list.
HOW DO I FIND HELP WITH BRACES?

Albert Einstein Dept. of Dental Medicine
5501 Old York Road
Paley Building 2nd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19141
(215) 456-7130

Mankad Dental Associates, PC
1420 Walnut Street Suite 518
Philadelphia, PA 19102
(215) 567-5949

Pediatric Dental Associates, Ltd.
6404 Roosevelt Boulevard Lower level
Philadelphia, PA 19149
(215) 743-3700

Episcopal Hospital (Pediatric Dental Associates)
100 E. Lehigh Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19125
(215) 707-1030

Prem Gulati, D.D.S.
4001 Lyman Drive
(215) 637-6300

Specialty Management Consulting
626 Snyder Avenue Suite 200
Philadelphia, PA 19114
(215) 940-0301

University City Dental Associates
5338 Baltimore Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19143
(215) 476-2122

Temple and Penn Dental schools provide braces for children for a discounted price with a payment plan.

University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine
Orthodontic Department
(215) 898-8982

Temple University School of Dentistry
Orthodontic Department
(215) 707-2866
WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD HAS A DENTAL EMERGENCY?

If your child has a toothache or other mouth pain – or has broken or knocked out a tooth, you should call your dentist immediately. Here are other steps you can take in different emergency situations.

**Toothache**
Rinse the mouth with warm water. Carefully use dental floss to remove any food that might be trapped between the teeth. Do not place aspirin on the aching tooth or gum tissues. If your child’s face is swollen, use a cold compress or just ice.

**Knocked-Out Tooth**
Find the tooth if possible and handle it only by the top (not the root). If it is dirty, rinse gently under running water. Do not scrub or remove any attached tissue fragments. If possible, gently insert and hold the tooth in its socket (you can have your child gently bite down on a clean gauze or cloth). If this is not possible, place the tooth in a cup of milk or cool water. Go to the dentist immediately (within 30 minutes if possible). Remember to bring the tooth. Quick action is important.
**Broken Tooth**

Gently clean any dirt from the injured area with warm water. Put a cold compress over the injured area. If possible, try to find the tooth fragments. Go to the dentist immediately.

**Bitten or Cut Tongue, Lip or Cheek**

Apply direct pressure to the bleeding area with a clean cloth or gauze. If there is swelling, apply a cold compress. If the bleeding doesn’t stop after 15 minutes or isn’t controlled by simple pressure, go the hospital emergency room.

**HOW DO I PAY FOR CARE FOR MY CHILD?**

Children who have Medical Assistance (MA) can get “all medically necessary” oral health services for free. Children who have CHIP (Children’s Health Insurance Program) also get oral health services for free, except for braces.

For a more complete list of dentists in your area, call your insurance company’s member services. The phone numbers are listed below.

**Medical Assistance**

- AmeriChoice 1-800-321-4462
- Health Partners 1-800-553-0784
- Keystone Mercy Health Plan 1-800-521-6860

Continued on following page
Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

- Aetna 1-800-822-2447
- AmeriChoice 1-877-707-5437
- Caring Foundation/Keystone/Blue Cross Blue Shield 1-800-464-5437

CAN MY CHILD GET DENTAL CARE EVEN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE?

Children and adults who do not have insurance can get free or low-cost dental services at many practices throughout the city. Look under “discounted services or no fees” on pages 8-14 for free or low-cost dental care.

But remember – most children in Philadelphia can get health insurance. Call PCCY at 215-563-5848 x17 for help applying for health insurance.
For supporting this project, special thanks to:
Aetna Foundation
Eagles Youth Partnership
William Penn Foundation

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The Cartographic Modeling Lab, University of Pennsylvania
for assistance with this guide

For more information contact:

Colleen McCauley-Brown
Seven Benjamin Franklin Parkway
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Phone: 215.563.5848  Fax: 215.563.9442
email: info@pccy.org
www.pccy.org