

Connecting Kids to Coverage

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN



CAMPAIGN NOTES

MARCH 18, 2016

Dental Coverage: Key to Driving Enrollment

Did you know that dental coverage is one of the key drivers for families to enroll in healthcare coverage? In fact, 68 percent of parents in a [national survey](#) cited dental care as a prime motivator for seeking Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage for their kids. This is critical, given tooth decay is the [number one](#) chronic childhood disease – a disease that is preventable with healthy habits and proper dental care.

Children enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP have access to comprehensive oral health services including, check-ups, x-rays, fluoride treatments, dental sealants, fillings and more. Raising awareness of these benefits can help strengthen your outreach efforts and motivate parents to enroll their child in Medicaid or CHIP.

Campaign in Action

The [Karuk Tribe](#) in Northern California found that children who need dental care the most are in families that are less receptive to traditional outreach efforts. To connect children to dental health services, the Tribe used “out of the box” ideas such as Make a Kid Smile Day and a free dental health clinic, with a real “Tooth Fairy” to meet the kids and provide free giveaways. The Tribe has also hosted a soccer event and a recipe contest where the ticket for admission was an insurance or Medi-Cal card. Both events succeeded at increasing Medicaid and CHIP enrollment.

The [American Dental Association](#) is engaging in several campaigns, including the [2MIN2X](#) campaign, encouraging kids to brush their teeth for two minutes, two times per day; the [75th Anniversary of National Children's Dental Health Month](#), a campaign to educate families on the importance of dental health; and [Give Kids a Smile](#), a program providing free dental services to underserved children. The ADA has also been actively involved in educating pregnant women about the importance of oral health during pregnancy and how a mother's poor oral health can affect her children.

The Children's Dental Health Project just launched a new website, [End Cavities](#), providing accurate information about tooth decay in children and a number of resources to use to educate families about keeping kids cavity free.

[View our recent webinar](#) to get tips, resources and more information about these organizations' efforts on dental health coverage. Access all past webinars [here](#).

Additional Dental Health Resources

National Children's Dental Health Month may have ended, but there are a number of resources available to promote oral health all year. Dental health coverage provided by Medicaid is different in each state, so it's important to [check your state's](#) dental coverage before engaging in outreach. The [Insure Kids Now Dental Provider Locator Tool](#) can help families locate providers that accept Medicaid and CHIP in their area. There are also a number of [“Think Teeth” oral health materials](#) available to use in your outreach. These materials can be [customized](#) with your organization's information – please allow two weeks for customization. Find all of the free “Think Teeth” materials [here](#). Also, many of you reach audiences that speak different languages. The National Maternal & Child Oral Health Resource Center provides resources in a [number of languages](#) promoting oral health during pregnancy.

Share Your Dental Health Stories!

Are you incorporating oral health messaging in your outreach efforts? We want to hear your story and share your best practices with other organizations! Tweet us at #Enroll365 or email us at ConnectingKids@cms.hhs.gov.