Dental Health Taskforce launches effort to help U.S. children

The U.S. arm of the Global Children's Dental Health Taskforce is launching an initiative to improve the oral health of toddlers and preschoolers in the U.S. The taskforce in response to the recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) showing that 28 percent of toddlers and preschoolers in the U.S. have tooth decay, and rates of oral disease are even higher among poor and minority children.

The CDC report shows an increase in decay in the primary teeth of children aged 2 to 5 years from 24 percent during the 1980-1984 timeframe to 28 percent from 1999 through 2004. The study also found that 74 percent of children aged 2 to 11 with tooth decay have unfilled cavities.

“ Tooth decay remains the single most common chronic disease of children in the U.S.—five times more common than asthma,” warns pediatrician David Krol, a member of the taskforce and chairman of pediatrics at the University of Toledo College of Medicine. “It is an insidious disease that starts early and can devastate children’s lives for years, even decades.”

The pattern with baby teeth is what sets children up for future problems. “Tooth decay in childhood is an indicator of what's going to happen in adolescence. It is a very good predictor of behavior for the rest of their lives,” says global taskforce coordinator Raman Bedi, a professor at Kings College in London.

Tooth decay remains the single most common chronic disease of children in the U.S.—five times more common than asthma,” warns pediatrician David Krol, a member of the taskforce and chairman of pediatrics at the University of Toledo College of Medicine. “It is an insidious disease that starts early and can devastate children’s lives for years, even decades.”

“ Tooth decay remains the single most common chronic disease of children in the U.S.—five times more common than asthma,” warns pediatrician David Krol, a member of the taskforce and chairman of pediatrics at the University of Toledo College of Medicine. “It is an insidious disease that starts early and can devastate children’s lives for years, even decades.”

The global taskforce was established in 2006 after 40 senior dental advisors and chief dental officers called for its formation at the European Union Presidency meeting in England in September 2005. It is supported by the government of the United Kingdom in affiliation with the World Health Organization and Colgate-Palmolive.

How to help

Henry Schein
(www.henryschein.com)
For information, contact Jason Krause, project manager for Sullivan-Schein Dental, at 414.290.2555 or jason.krause@henryschein.com. For Henry Schein CareS, contact Kim Craig, business development manager for Henry Schein, at 651.454.3115 or kim.craig@henryschein.com.

Give Back a Smile
(www.aacd.com/givebackasmile)
To donate or volunteer, call 800.773.4227 or write to Give Back a Smile, 5401 World Dairy Drive, Madison, Wis., 53718. You may also fill out a form on the Web site, or download the form and fax it to 608.222.9540.

Give Kids A Smile
(www.gkas.org)
To volunteer, sign up by calling 656.39.SMILE or FAX a completed volunteer form, available at the GKAS Web site, to 1.656.278.2076.

National Children’s Oral Health Foundation
(www.ncolf.org)
Contact the NCOLF by mail at 4108 Park Road, Suite 505, Charlotte, NC 28209; by phone at 800.559.9858; or by e-mail at info@ncolf.org.

Oral Health America
(www.oralhealthamerica.org)
Contact OHA by mail at 410 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 552, Chicago, IL, 60611; by phone at 312.856.9000; or by e-mail at liz@oralhealthamerica.org.

Global Health Outreach
To volunteer, complete an online application at www.cmawashington.org (click on “GOH Mission Trips” under the “Quick Links” banner), or contact GOH by mail at P.O. Box 7500, Bristol, Tenn., 37621; by phone at 425.844.1000; or by e-mail at gho@cmda.org.