



News Release

AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION AWARDS \$300,000 GRANT TO EDUCATE PEDIATRICIANS IN ORAL HEALTH CARE

For release: February 11, 2008

CHICAGO - The American Dental Association Foundation (ADAF) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) are pleased to announce a collaborative effort as a result of an ADAF grant that will help improve the oral health of children in a critical age group.

The "Working Together for Oral Health" grant will arm pediatricians with the tools they need to assess the oral health of children, particularly those aged 0-3, who can develop dental problems before they see a dentist for the first time. The grant will provide up to \$100,000 annually for three years (a total of up to \$300,000).

The ADA Foundation grant will fund annual "train-the-trainer" oral health summits at which pediatricians will learn to conduct oral health risk assessments (including oral screening exams), teach families about oral health and prevention and refer children to a dental home. Over three years, all 66 AAP chapters will have the opportunity to send representatives, who will return home to lead training in their home states. The grant will also fund an oral health preceptorship program, which provides pediatricians in underserved areas with the support to promote oral health for the most vulnerable children. Ten awards will be given per year.

The need is great:

- Dental caries (cavities) are the most prevalent infectious disease among U.S. children.
- While Americans of all ages continue to show improvements in oral health, tooth decay in primary (baby) teeth increased among 2- to 5-year-olds.
- More than 51 million hours of school are lost each year because of dental-related problems.
- Caries in primary teeth increase the risk of caries in permanent teeth.

Access to oral health care is critical for the early identification and prevention of childhood caries. Unfortunately, many children in the 0-3 age group never see a dentist, especially economically disadvantaged children and those who live in areas without ready access to a dentist. Because pediatricians see children early and frequently, they can play a role in identifying high-risk children.

The AAP has recognized the rise of oral disease in young children and oral health is a key part of its strategic plan.

"We're grateful to the ADA Foundation for recognizing the importance of the role pediatricians can play in maintaining the oral health of young children," said Renee Jenkins, MD, FAAP, president of the American Academy of Pediatrics. "By arming pediatricians with the tools they need to assess oral health risk, we can begin to reduce the number of children who need but don't receive dental care and build a solid foundation for their oral health."

"The ADA Foundation is excited about this grant's potential to broaden the reach of oral health messages to parents. Our alliance with the American Academy of Pediatrics seeks to facilitate pediatrician and dentist collaboration at the national, state and local levels," said Arthur Dugoni, DDS, MS, president of the ADA Foundation.

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The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.

The ADA Foundation is a catalyst for uniting people and organizations to make a difference through better oral health. Since 1991, the ADA Foundation has disbursed nearly \$31 million dollars to support such charitable activities. In addition to funding grants for dental research, education, scholarships and access to care, the Foundation supports Charitable Assistance Programs such as relief grants to dentists and their dependents that are unable to support themselves due to injury, a medical condition or advanced age; and grants and loans to those who are victims of disasters. <http://www.adafoundation.org>.