

Mission:
To protect, promote & improve the health
of all people in Florida through integrated
state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

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State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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FREE CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM LAUNCHED

~New project offers dental screening to children five and under~

TALLAHASSEE — February is Children's Dental Health Month and the Florida Department of Health is working to promote good oral health for children and families through preventive care. The department's Public Health Dental Program, in partnership with the Florida Dental Hygiene Association and Head Start, is launching a new project to provide oral health screenings in 48 Head Start centers across 29 counties.

"The department is proud to partner with the Florida Dental Hygiene Association and Head Start to give children access to oral health education and services across our state," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. "Early dental care keeps children healthy, and this collaborative project helps to reach more children."

Tooth decay remains the single most common chronic disease in children and continues to impact people of all ages and backgrounds. To address this issue, local county health department dental clinics provided over 257,000 dental services to over 47,000 children ages 0-5 in 2014. The Public Health Dental Program works to promote prevention and emphasizes the importance of public health measures such as dental sealants and community water fluoridation for preventing tooth decay and keeping smiles healthy.

"The Florida Dental Hygiene Association is excited to partner with the Florida Department of Health on this Head Start Oral Health Screening Project," said Tami Miller, executive director of the Florida Dental Hygiene Association. "We will conduct the screenings at the centers, provide the children with oral health education and promote the significance of a dental home. We are hoping to make future smiles a little brighter and a lot healthier in the state of Florida!"

In addition to basic oral health screening and oral health education, each child will receive a toothbrush kit to take home and information for follow-up care with a local dental professional.

"The Florida Head Start Collaboration Office is thrilled to be working with the Public Health Dental Program," said Lilli Copp, Florida Head Start Collaboration Office director. "We are excited to have the opportunity to share the importance of both oral health and a dental home for all of our enrollees and their families."

The information gathered throughout the course of this project will inform and guide future program activities. For more about the Public Health Dental Program visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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