

Preventive Dental Visits

for children and adolescents are important!

Good oral health helps us eat, speak, smile, and express feelings.

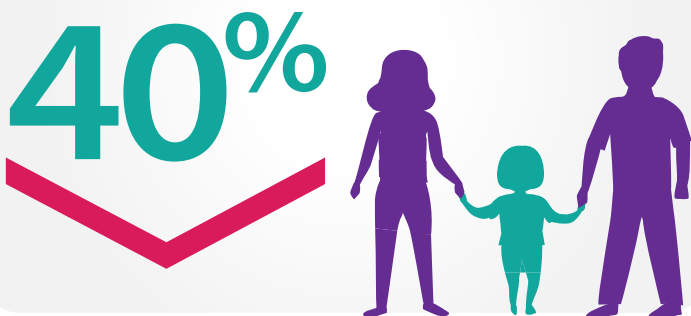
Access to Preventive Dental Visits

New ways for making preventive oral health services more accessible, such as incorporating oral health care into primary care, are needed to reduce the burden of oral disease.¹

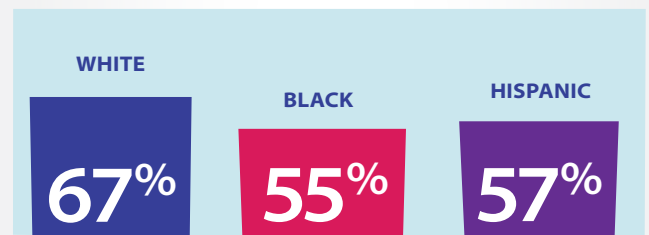
Children and adolescents with poor oral health are more likely to have oral pain, miss school, and perform poorly in school than their peers with better oral health.²



Less than 40 percent of children and adolescents from families with low incomes get preventive oral health services.³



For children enrolled in Medicaid, white children are more likely to have had a dental visit in the past 6 months than black or Hispanic children.⁴



Benefits of Preventive Dental Visits

Prevention and early intervention in childhood and adolescence are important because oral health impacts a person's overall health and well-being throughout their life.

Early dental visits for children are important because parents can get counseling on oral hygiene, fluoride, injury prevention, and nutrition.⁵

Because well-child visits start early and take place regularly, primary care health professionals are uniquely positioned to assess a young child's risk for tooth decay, provide preventive oral health services, and educate families about oral health.⁶



- With early intervention, it may be possible to reduce or eliminate future tooth decay and reduce dental costs.⁷
- Early prevention and intervention can mean big cost savings. Average costs of oral health services are lower among children who have an early preventive dental visit than for children who have their first visit later.⁸
- Young children in families with low incomes are much more likely to have tooth decay than children in families with higher incomes.⁸

References

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6. Considerations for Oral Health Integration in Primary Care Practice for Children
7. Early Preventive Dental Visits
8. Early Preventive Dental Visits: Effects on Subsequent Utilization and Costs

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