



DENTAL DISEASE & CALIFORNIA'S KIDS



The most common chronic health problem facing California's kids is a largely preventable one.

Dental disease can affect children's overall health, self-esteem and academic performance. In fact, dental problems are the leading reason why children in California miss school. Research has found that **California students reported missing an estimated 874,000 school days due to dental problems - at a cost of \$29 to \$32 million dollars in lost average daily attendance funding**¹. Even before children enter school, tooth decay is already an issue. Of California kindergartners, more than 50% have experienced tooth decay and more than 25% have untreated tooth decay.

Schools can play an important role in ensuring student health and helping to reduce dental disease in children. The kindergarten oral health assessment requirement (AB 1433) of 2005 that was recently improved upon by SB 3792 is a way for schools to raise oral health awareness and connect students to dental care². Additionally, school districts can make oral health a priority by identifying the assessment requirement in their local control accountability plan.

In Contra Costa County



72% of school districts reported kindergarten oral health assessment data in 2016.



63% of eligible kindergartners in the reporting school districts had an **oral health assessment**.



17% showed signs of **untreated decay** of those assessed.

California Dental Association, AB1433 Reported Data website, <https://www.cda.org/public-resources/community-resources/kindergarten-oral-health-requirement/ab1433-results>, accessed on September 25, 2017.

Did you know ?



State Superintendent Tom Torlakson wrote a letter to all County and District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators encouraging completion and reporting of Kindergarten Oral Health Assessments. View it here:

<http://bit.ly/KOHA4Schools>

¹ Pourat N and Nicholson G. Unaffordable Dental Care Is Linked to Frequent School Absences. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2009.

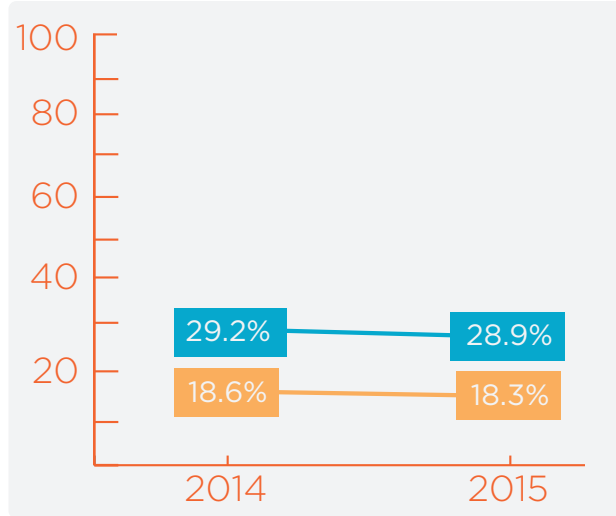
² https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB379

In Contra Costa County, the percentage of Medi-Cal enrolled children (ages 0-20) who have received an annual dental visit and/or a preventive dental service has declined slightly over a two-year period.³

Service:

■ Annual Dental Visit ■ Preventive Services

Percentage of all Medi-Cal eligible kids ages, 0-20



Visits to the emergency room (ER) for preventable dental conditions are costly to families and to the state. The average cost of ER visits for dental problems is nearly 10 times more expensive than the cost of preventive care delivered by a dental provider.

In Contra Costa County⁴:

43%
of dental related ER visits were for our littlest
0-3 years old



54.9%
of dental related ER visits were for kids
0-5 years old

Help make sure children are achieving optimal oral health!

Contact your local school board, <http://www.cccoe.k12.ca.us/supe/board.html#meetings>, and ask how to prioritize students' oral health through the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). Each school district must engage parents, educators, employees and the community to establish LCAPs that reflect local priorities.

For more information, please contact:
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³ Dental Fee-for-Service (FFS) Performance Measures, <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/FFSPerformanceMeasures.aspx>, FFS Quarterly Measures (Fiscal Year Basis), Utilization by County, Quarters 1-4 averaged for each year.

⁴ California Department of Health Care Services, Medi-Cal Dental Services Division. Public Records Act request submitted by Children Now. Data received August 2016. Performance measures are based on 11 of 12 months of eligibility with no more than a one month gap.