

Our Goals

School and Adolescent Oral Health (SAOH) Programs strive to:

- Assess the oral health needs of school-age children and adolescents
- Develop policies to improve the oral health of children and families
- Assure that children are getting needed prevention and treatment services



With these goals incorporated into the public education system, we can effectively target and treat oral disease in children at this crucial time in their growth. **Tooth decay remains the single most common chronic disease of childhood.**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- More than half of children ages 5-9 have had at least one cavity or filling and about 75% of 17-year olds have experienced tooth decay.
- More than 51 million school hours are lost each year because of dental-related illness.
- Children with untreated oral disease experience persistent pain, inability to eat comfortably or chew well, suffer embarrassment, and are distracted from play and learning. They are unable to sleep and unable to thrive.

The Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) is dedicated to improving the nation's oral health. ASTDD provides leadership to advocate a governmental oral health presence in each state and territory, to formulate and promote sound oral health policy, to increase awareness of oral health issues, and to assist in the development of initiatives for prevention and control of oral diseases. For more information on ASTDD and state oral health programs visit:

www.astdd.org

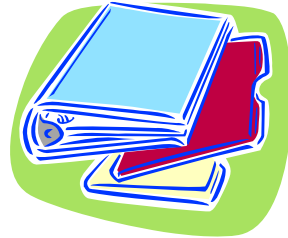
The ASTDD School and Adolescent Oral Health (SAOH) Workgroup serves as a resource to state oral health programs and works to ensure a strong oral health component in all school and adolescent health initiatives. The mission of the SAOH Workgroup is to promote the importance of good oral health practices that improve the oral health of school age children and adolescents through education, networking and collaborative partnerships at local and national levels. In 2007, the ASTDD passed an oral health resolution supporting the integration of oral health into coordinated school health programs.



Integrating Oral Health into Essential School Health Programs



Integration of Oral Health Into the 8 Components of a Coordinated School Health Program



- 1) **Health education** that incorporates oral health education into the curriculum including the prevention and control of oral and dental diseases.
- 2) **Physical education** programs should promote the use of mouth guards for the prevention of injury.
- 3) **School health services** training to provide oral health services such as sealants or varnishes. School nurses could be trained to provide preventive services and oral health information.



- 4) **Nutrition services** that encourage healthy eating habits to prevent tooth decay and conditions such as obesity and diabetes.
- 5) **Counseling, psychological, & social services** that incorporate the impact of oral health on self-esteem and students' mental, emotional, and social well-being.



- 6) **A healthy school environment** that promotes oral health. Junk food should not be used for fundraisers or offered in vending machines. Policies on tobacco use should be enforced.
- 7) **Promote oral health for staff** by providing access to oral health information and encouraging them to set an example for students by practicing good oral health behaviors.



- 8) **Family and community involvement** in the enhancement of students' oral health and well-being.

Take Action!

To learn more about how to integrate oral health into your school's health program, please complete the information below and mail or fax it to the contact listed at the bottom of the page.

School Nurse: _____

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

Telephone: () _____

Fax: () _____

Email: _____

Grades: _____

Your state's Oral Health Program Director is:

