



DENTAL DOINGS

Seven Steps For Keeping Teeth Healthy For A Lifetime

(NAPSA)—A smile can last a lifetime—if you take care of it. For that reason, it's important for parents to instill good oral health habits in children as early as possible.

According to U.S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona's "National Call to Action to Promote Oral Health" report, children lose more than 51 million school hours and adults lose more than 164 million work hours each year due to dental disease or dental visits. The nation's total bill for dental services was estimated to be more than \$70.1 billion in 2002.

"Oral health disease is making disturbing inroads into communities across the country," Dr. Marsha Butler, Colgate-Palmolive's Vice President, Global Oral Health and Professional Relations, explains. "For children between the ages of 5 and 17 here in the U.S., tooth decay is more common than asthma, more common than hay fever, and it poses a significant threat to our children's overall health and well-being."

Recently, during the celebration of National Children's Dental Health Month, Colgate and Dr. Carmona unveiled "The U.S. Surgeon General's Seven Steps to a Bright Smile," tips that were developed, with a grant from Colgate-Palmolive, to help keep teeth and gums strong and healthy:

1. Brush teeth and gums with fluoride toothpaste at least twice a day, especially after eating breakfast and before bedtime.
2. Visit the dentist regularly.
3. Floss your teeth daily.
4. Use fluoride rinse for strong,



By practicing good oral hygiene, it's possible to keep teeth and gums strong and healthy for a lifetime.

healthy teeth and gums.

5. Limit the number of times you eat snacks each day—and remember to practice healthy eating and get plenty of calcium.
6. Wear a mouthguard when playing sports.
7. Ask your dental professional about dental sealants.

Through its *Bright Smiles, Bright Futures* program, Colgate has reached more than 50 million children with free dental screenings, treatment referrals and oral health education. The company is more than halfway to meeting a public commitment it made to reach 100 million children with these services by the year 2010. *Bright Smiles, Bright Futures* empowers children to take control of their oral health and helps to generate greater awareness about the importance of maintaining good dental hygiene.

To learn more about the *Bright Smiles, Bright Futures* program, visit www.ColgateBSBF.com.

Note to Editors: Although this article can be used at any time, it may be most appropriate during February, National Children's Dental Health Month.