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February Spotlight: Children's Dental Health

OKEMOS, Mich.— February is [National Children's Dental Health month](#) (NCDHM)! The NCDHM program provides program coordinators, Michigan Dental Association's member dentists, teachers, and parents with resources to promote the benefits of good oral health to children. This year's NCDHM campaign slogan "Sugar Wars" is displayed on many resources designed to encourage kids to fight for good oral health while preserving their healthy smile. Developing positive dental health habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

In Michigan, more than 55 percent of third graders have experienced tooth decay and over 27% have untreated dental disease. Although overall rates of tooth decay have decreased over the past four decades, decay has actually increased in preschool age children in recent years. Children under the age of 5, regardless of insurance, are least likely to have visited the dentist compared to children of older ages.

"Children's teeth are meant to last a lifetime, and a healthy smile is important to a child's self-esteem. With proper care, a balanced diet, and regular dental visits, their teeth can remain healthy and strong," said Dr. Mark Johnston, MDA President.

Learn how you can incorporate proper dental health practices in your home! Find fun and educational tools for you and your kids available on the MDA's website, <http://www.smilemichigan.com/ncdhm>, or the American Dental Association's Mouth Healthy website, www.mouthhealthy.com.

About the Michigan Dental Association

The MDA works to educate the public about oral health, promotes the science and art of dentistry, and provides educational materials and services to its 5,500 members, enhancing their ability to provide quality care. For more information, visit www.smilemichigan.com.

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