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Parents say kids' oral health not making the grade observes Delta Dental survey

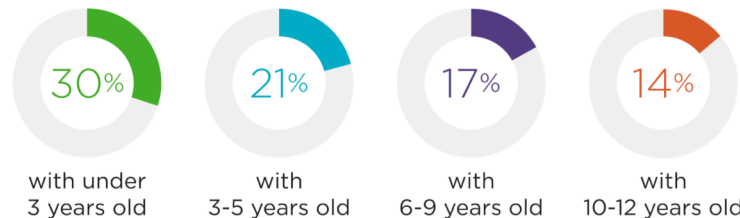
Parents' perceptions of their children's oral health decline as kids age

OAK BROOK, Ill. — July 18, 2019 — The end of the academic year signals report card time for millions of households across America. Likewise, parents recently assigned grades to the status of their kids' oral health as a part of the Children's Oral Health Survey. Few parents (21%) nationwide would give their kids an excellent bill of oral health.

Views of their young ones' oral health tend to diminish over time as parents relinquish control of kids' brushing and flossing habits. For example, while 30% of parents score children under 3 years old with having excellent oral health, that number declines to 21% for 3-5 years old, 17% for 6-9 years old, and 14% for 10-12 years old.

Youngest kids are top of oral health class!

Percentage of parents who grade children's oral health as excellent



Children's Oral Health Survey from Delta Dental

Obstacles to children's healthy smiles

So what contributes to kids' oral health being less than it could be? Get your toothbrush ready ... not brushing enough (50%) is the most popular response from parents, according to the Delta Dental national survey.

Other top responses include not flossing enough (46%), eating too many sweets (37%), and a family history of poor oral health (21%).

No vacation from oral hygiene

"While most parents do not view their children's mouths as pictures of model health, there is an opportunity to inspire healthy oral care habits at an early age," said Dr. Joe Dill, DDS, MBA, Delta Dental Plans Association's vice president of dental science and network strategy.

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“Summer break from school can be especially difficult for maintaining proper oral hygiene, as normal daily routines may be disrupted,” Dr. Dill continued. “Regularly remind kids to brush for two minutes twice a day, including during summer vacation.”

Parents can help keep their children’s oral health on track with the free Delta Dental mobile app featuring a toothbrush timer. Delta Dental Mobile is optimized for iOS and Android devices (smartphones and tablets) and is available for download in the [Apple App Store](#) or the [Google Play Store](#) for Android devices. To learn more, search for Delta Dental in the app store.

About the survey

The Children’s Oral Health Survey was conducted between December 31, 2018, and January 13, 2019, among a nationally representative sample of 1,481 parents of children ages 12 and under. The margin of error is +/- 3%.

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About Delta Dental Plans Association

Delta Dental Plans Association, based in Oak Brook, Illinois, is the not-for-profit national association of the 39 independent Delta Dental companies. Through these companies, Delta Dental is the nation’s largest provider of dental insurance, covering more than 78 million Americans, and offering the country’s largest dental network with approximately 156,000 participating dentists. In 2017, Delta Dental companies provided more than \$61 million in direct and in-kind community outreach support to improve the oral health of adults, children and infants in local communities across the country. For more information, visit: [deltadental.com](#).

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