

WELLSPAN

ORAL HEALTH

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PHOTO BY TIM DAVIDSON — THE WASHINGTON POST

Deamonte Driver died Sunday after two operations and more than six weeks of hospital care.

For Want of a Dentist

GROUPS AT RISK

- ▶ Poor of all ages (children and older Americans)
- ▶ Racial and ethnic minority groups
- ▶ Medically compromised or those with disabilities

RAMIFICATIONS OF POOR ORAL HEALTH

- ▶ Dental caries (tooth decay) is the single most common chronic childhood disease. It is 5 times more common than asthma and 7 times more common than hay fever.
- ▶ Poor children suffer twice as much dental caries as their more affluent peers.
- ▶ One out of four children in America are born into poverty (\$17,000 for a family of four), and these children have more severe and untreated decay
- ▶ 25% of poor children have not seen a dentist before entering kindergarten
- ▶ For each child without medical insurance at least 2.6 children are without dental insurance

CHILDREN CONT.'

- ▶ Fewer than one in five medicaid-covered children received a single dental visit in a recent year-long study period.
- ▶ Social impact of oral disease in children is substantial. More than 51 million school hours are lost to dental-related illness
- ▶ Poor children suffer nearly 12 times more restricted-activity days than children from higher-income families.
- ▶ Pain from untreated dental disease can lead to problems eating, speaking, and attending to learn.

Factors that Limit Access to Dental Care

- ▶ Lack of finances (including third party coverage)
- ▶ Lack of transportation / child care constraints
- ▶ Language & cultural barriers
- ▶ Lack of perceived need for care
- ▶ Fear

Cont.

- ▶ Difficulty finding a dentist who accepts Medicaid or Chip
- ▶ Waiting periods for insurance
- ▶ Difficulty finding dentist who see children under age 3
- ▶ Decreasing supply of dental professionals
- ▶ Three times more parents say dental care, rather than medical care, is their child's biggest unmet need according to recent federal surveys

Functions of the Primary Dentition

- ▶ Mastication
- ▶ Phonetics
- ▶ Space maintenance
- ▶ Guide for permanent dentition
- ▶ Self esteem/esthetics

Oral Health

The whole body connection

The understanding that teeth can last a lifetime and that good oral health is essential to good overall health is beginning to become more evident in medicine and society as a whole.

SYSTEMIC EFFECTS

- ▶ HEART DISEASE
- ▶ DIABETES
- ▶ PRETERM LOW BIRTH WEIGHT BABIES
- ▶ STROKE
- ▶ RESPIRATORY DISEASE

DISPELLING FACT FROM FICTION

- ▶ Why worry about baby teeth? They are going to fall out anyway.
- ▶ Soft teeth run in my family
- ▶ Fluoride is hazardous to your health
- ▶ A child does not need to see a dentist until all their baby teeth are present. (age 3?)
- ▶ Diet misconceptions
- ▶ Issues with access to care

Prevention

- ▶ Fluoride (water supply and topical application)
- ▶ Educating expecting parents/guardians
- ▶ Appropriate referral (1st dental visit age 12 months)
- ▶ Sealants
- ▶ Focusing on Proactive vs. reactive care (establishing a dental home)
- ▶ Appropriate access

Is This Preventable ?



Early Childhood Caries (ECC)

- ▶ Transmission of Strep. Mutans
- ▶ Poor dietary habits
- ▶ Sleeping with a bottle
- ▶ Poor oral hygiene
- ▶ Lack of fluoride
- ▶ Lack of access to care
- ▶ Low dental IQ (early education)
- ▶ Reactive care

Detrimental Effects of (ECC) on Permanent Dentition

- ▶ Infection (abscess)
- ▶ Enamel defects
- ▶ Loss of space maintenance
- ▶ Early establishment of poor oral hygiene habits
- ▶ Increased risk of caries in adult teeth
- ▶ Traumatic dental experience

COST

- ▶ Average cost of a routine dental exam with preventative care is approximately \$100
- ▶ Treatment of early childhood caries(ECC) may require extensive restorative work
- ▶ The average cost to treat ECC is \$1,000-\$2,000 per child
- ▶ Include general anesthesia in an outpatient setting and the cost can easily reach over \$6,000 per case

Hope on the horizon

- ▶ Hoodner Dental Clinic
- ▶ Statewide fluoride initiative
- ▶ Development of educational program for expecting mothers and parents of young children. Collaborative effort with medical community and local groups (train the trainer).

Hoodner Dental Clinic

- ▶ Collaborative effort
- ▶ 2000 sq. foot facility with five dental operatories
- ▶ Full time staff
- ▶ Restricted to medicaid and HYN.
- ▶ Comprehensive dental services
- ▶ First full year of operation on target for 6000 patient visits

Referral Sources

- ▶ Head Start
- ▶ Emergency Department
- ▶ Self referrals
- ▶ Primary care providers
- ▶ Social services
- ▶ HYN
- ▶ Cancer Center
- ▶ Renal Specialist
- ▶ Ryan White