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Dental Home by Age One: A Campaign to Decrease Tooth Decay in Young Children

Eau Claire, WI- Nov. 25th, 2015- The Eau Claire Healthy Communities Oral Health Promotion Action Team is collaborating with local medical and dental professionals as part of the ‘Dental Home by Age One’ Campaign, supported by the Wisconsin Dental Association and Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. In response to the increasing number of young children with tooth decay, the action team released a webinar session for medical professionals about how they can play a vital role in tooth decay prevention in young children. In addition, they hosted an evening educational event for dental professionals where they learned about how the importance of getting children to their clinics before age 1, as well as how to perform an exam on young children.



The ‘Dental Home by Age One’ is a campaign to raise awareness about the importance of oral health in young children. The goal of the campaign is to have children visit a pediatric dentist by their first birthday to establish a ‘dental home’. “Early examination and preventative care will protect your child’s smile now and in the future.” says Linda Bohacek, Co-Chair of the Eau Claire Healthy Communities Oral Health Promotion Action Team. Tooth decay, if left untreated even in the earliest stages of life, can have a serious impact on a child’s health--causing problems that often last into adulthood and affecting kids ‘ability to sleep, speak, learn and grow into happy and healthy adults.

The CDC reports that two to five-year-olds are the only age group in this country where the incidence of tooth decay is on the rise. According to the 2010 Burden of Oral Disease in Wisconsin, about 25 % of Wisconsin’s Head Start children ages three and four have untreated decay and 33% have had cavities and now have fillings. Tooth decay can develop any time after the first tooth comes in, starting around six months old, but good oral health habits should begin even earlier. Even before children get their first tooth, the mouth and gums should be wiped with a soft, damp cloth or infant toothbrush after feedings.

To find a list of dentists that see children before the age of 1 for a dental visit, please visit Eau Claire Healthy Communities, visit and click on the Oral Health Promotion Action Team:
www.ehealthycommunities.org.

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