

Task force gives children's oral health a boost

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By Staff Report (editor@ledger-dispatch.com)

Preventive oral health services for children in Amador County have taken a turn for the better.

"Coordinated efforts through a newly formed Oral Health Task Force have started the ball rolling to help children and their families receive education, screenings and fluoride varnishes through multiple opportunities," said Nina Machado, First 5 Amador's executive director.

"There was a pilot program a few years ago that was started through (the) Amador County Public Health (Department) that helped get this project off the ground and the momentum continues to grow," added public health spokeswoman Angel LeSage.

Machado noted that there is a group of committed individuals from public health, the school district, Jackson Creek Dental, the Amador Community Foundation and dental health professionals in the community working to establish ongoing oral health education and services to children in Amador County.

At this year's Celebrate Our Children event in Martell, individuals from Amador Smile Keepers, Jackson Creek Dental Group, and Dr. Montalbo's office provided free oral health assessment screenings and also applied fluoride varnish treatments to more than 75 children. Fluoride varnish is a protective coating that is painted on the teeth, making the tooth enamel more resistant to the acid that causes tooth decay. It aids in preventing cavities and helps repair the early stages of tooth decay even before the decay is visible. In addition, all parents received dental education materials and their children took home toothbrushes, dental floss, pencils and coloring books.

Along with the services provided at Celebrate Our Children, local dentists and hygienists have been providing oral health screenings at kindergarten enrollments throughout the county. These screenings help satisfy the Assembly Bill 1433 requirements that recommend dental screenings for children entering kindergarten.

Machado said the goal of the task force was to reduce the need for treatment caused by serious decay as has been seen in the past. For more information, call First 5 Amador at 257-1092.



Local dental professionals provided fluoride varnish treatments and parent education to more than 75 children at this year's Celebrate Our Children event.

Photo by: [Courtesy to the Ledger Dispatch](#)

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