The Evidence Supporting Pediatric Oral Health Nursing Interventions

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Early Childhood Caries is Major Public Health Problem

- Dental caries (tooth decay) is the single most common chronic childhood disease (Surgeon General, 2000)
- Early childhood Caries (ECC) is 5x more common than asthma (Surgeon General, 2000)
- One in four children living in poverty has untreated dental caries (Dye, 2012)
- **50 million** school hours per year lost b/c of oral health related illness (pain, infection) (Surgeon General, 2000)
- 50% of all children have never visited a dentist (Dye, 2007)
  - 80% of dental caries occurs in 20% of children

CDC Public Health Library
### Morbidity

Early childhood Caries (ECC) is the most common chronic disease of childhood in 5-to-17 year olds.

ECC is 5x more common than asthma.

About **half of all children** and **two-thirds of adolescents** aged 12–19 years from lower income families have untreated tooth decay.

### Access

- **About 108 million people** in the U.S. have no dental insurance.
- The U.S. has about 141,800 working dentists and 174,100 dental hygienists, but **4,230 Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas** with **49 million people** living in them.

### Cost

- **51 million school hours** are lost annually because of oral health problems or dental visits.
- In 2010, an estimated **$108 billion** was spent on dental services in the United States.
- Application of fluoride varnish can reduce caries by 25-45%.

(CDC, 2011 & 2013; HRSA, 2014)
Germs from Mom can pass to baby

• Oral bacteria produce acids that persist for 20–40 minutes after sugar ingestion
• Oral acids lead to enamel demineralization
Children at High Risk for Early Tooth Decay

• Children on Medicaid
• Children whose mother or primary caregiver has cavities
• Children with siblings who have cavities
• Premature or low birth weight children
• Children with special health care needs
• Children who use a bottle after 15 months of age or have sweets and snacks more than 3 times a day
Oral Health Nursing Education and Practice Leads the Way

Putting the Mouth Back in the Head: HEENT to HEENOT

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