



California Department of Public Health
OFFICE OF ORAL HEALTH

ORAL HEALTH BYTES A Newsletter For Local Oral Health Programs



We love our dental hygienists, and October is [National Dental Hygiene Month](#), a time to celebrate the important work of dental hygienists and raise awareness around oral health. Oral health is an essential component to our overall health and wellbeing and dental hygienists play an important role in our communities in keeping people healthy and smiling. Not only do dental hygienists care for teeth and educate families in the dental office, but many provide preventative services in schools that are a crucial part of the *Moving California Oral Health Forward Work Plan*. If your LOHP works closely with a Registered Dental Hygienist (RDH) or a Registered Dental Hygienist in Alternative Practice (RDHAP) take the time to say a special thank you to them for being an Oral Health Champion. Perhaps recognize them with a certificate of appreciation or acknowledge them in an LOHP newsletter or on your county website/social media page.



A fun way for Local Oral Health Programs to build awareness of oral health and get their communities involved is to participate in National Brush Day on November 1st! [Nation Brush Day](#) helps focus on

children's oral health by providing facts about brushing, activities to make brushing fun, and tips to keep teeth healthy. This would be a great time to promote [Brush in a Box](#) in schools and childcare homes, pass out oral health supplies and have brushing demos or brush off contests in classrooms or at community events.



On the third Thursday in November, it is time for the [Great American Smokeout®](#) event. Take time in November to educate your communities on the dangers of tobacco and nicotine products and help make the connection between smoking and vaping and poor oral health and oral cancer. Join thousands of people across the country in taking an important step toward a healthier life. This is a great time to get dental offices involved and promote tobacco cessation and QUITLINES like [Kick It California](#).

Calendar

October- Dental Hygiene Month

November 1st- National Brush Day!

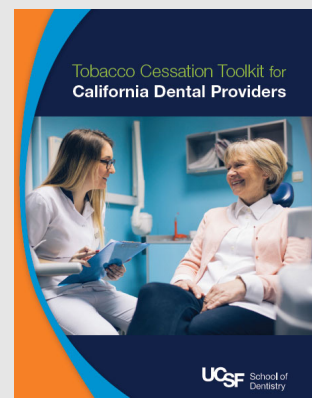
November 16th – Great American Smokeout®



Tobacco use negatively affects oral health in multiple ways and is one of the leading causes of preventable illness in the world. [COHTAC](#) provides a variety of [resources](#) to address tobacco cessation and prevention. For partnering with Dental Providers:

[Tobacco Cessation Toolkit for Dental Providers](#): printable PDF or online toolkit with tobacco cessation tools and resources to support dental providers that can be shared with your provider network and/or help you design a training.

[Tobacco Cessation Training for California Dental Provider webinar](#): a 1-hour overview webinar that covers oral and systemic health implications of new and emerging tobacco products, and evidence-based strategies for implementing brief tobacco cessation interventions in practice, including key points for patient education and communication. Dental providers in California can also receive 1.0 CDE credit after viewing it.



For partnering with schools:

Teenagers and youth as young as elementary school are using tobacco products, especially e-cigarettes, or vapes. California recently enacted Proposition 31, which bans the sale of flavored tobacco products, including flavored vapes, but use is still high. The [You and Me, Together Vape-Free](#) curriculum is an evidence-based, vaping prevention curriculum that sits within the Stanford [Tobacco Prevention Toolkit](#). It is available in elementary, middle school and high school versions and includes 6, 50-minute, lessons focused on the brain and other health effects, impact on the environment, marketing, stress and coping, and vaping cannabis. Each lesson provides activities, online quiz games, and worksheets, in addition to presentations and resources, aimed at addressing key factors associated with youth e-cigarette use. Go [here](#) to request more information and learn about upcoming trainings for educators.



As always, reach out to [COHTAC](#) with any questions or suggestions, and keep an eye on our website for [upcoming webinars](#).

Additional Resource: [Tobacco Control Branch](#)



October is National Dental Hygiene Month – Tips for Medi-Cal Members to Have Healthy Smiles That Will Last a Lifetime

As October arrives, it serves as a timely reminder to prioritize the health and strength of our teeth. National Dental Hygiene Month emphasizes the importance of good oral care for our overall well-being. However, our journey towards healthier smiles doesn't end there! On November 1st, National Brush Day provides a perfect opportunity to reinforce positive brushing habits.

To help families establish excellent oral health habits that will last a lifetime, here are some essential tips and resources:

1. **Brushing Twice a Day:** Encourage families to brush for two minutes, twice daily, using fluoride toothpaste to prevent tooth decay and gum disease. Download and share our Brushing Techniques flyer, available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#), which provides valuable insights into proper brushing techniques and the appropriate amount of toothpaste to use.
2. **Eating a Balanced Diet:** Advise members in your communities to limit sugary snacks and drinks, and instead, opt for nutritious foods that promote good dental health. Empower families to make tooth-friendly food choices with our Healthy Smiles Start With Healthy Foods insert, available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
3. **Visiting the Dentist Regularly:** Regular dental check-ups are the cornerstone of maintaining oral health. Medi-Cal members under 21 can have cleanings and exams every six months (sometimes more), while those over 21 can have them every 12 months. Medi-Cal members can learn more about their dental benefit and find a dentist by visiting [SmileCalifornia.org](#).

Visit [SmileCalifornia.org](#) to learn more and to download additional free resources in multiple languages.



[Healthy Tips for Tiny Teeth](#): Watch this video to learn tips to help combat common dental problems for children ages 0 to 6. Healthy Tips for Tiny Teeth is available to view and download in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Staff Spotlight



Rosanna Jackson has worked for the Oral Health program since 2006. She is currently the Community and Statewide Interventions Section Chief (Health Program Manager II). Initially, she was responsible for providing programmatic leadership for the California Children's Dental Disease Prevention Program, Community Water Fluoridation, oral health workforce and development. In her current position, she oversees the implementation of the Local Oral Health Programs and other statewide projects. Prior to working with the Office of Oral Health, Rosanna worked for other state programs such as the Breast Cancer and Early Detection Program, initiated the Safe Routes to School program, Tobacco Control Program and the Office of Family Planning. Prior to that Rosanna worked for statewide organizations, working with both rural and urban Indian Health organizations and was an advocate for Indian Health issues. She also served on the State American Indian Health Policy Committee and a variety of State Advisory Boards. Rosanna was the state Maternal and Child Health Director and Acting Executive Director for the California Urban Indian Health Council and worked in community health clinics to address the health care needs of underserved communities as a Health Educator for five clinics and Acting Director for the Orland Family Health Center. Rosanna has forty plus years' experience working in public health both at the state and local level. She is passionate about reaching the goal for all Californians to achieve their highest level of health and well-being no matter their zip code and has worked to address equity and social justice issues throughout her career. Rosanna loves spending time with her family and friends and has a special place in her heart for her granddaughter, as well as travelling, baking, cooking all types of cuisines, and reading.

LOHP Highlight: Fresno County



Nestled in California's agriculturally rich Central Valley, Fresno County is a diverse region encompassing the Fresno metropolitan area and its' many rural communities. Recognizing the profound impact of tobacco use on oral health outcomes, Fresno County's Local Oral Health Program (Fresno LOHP) has committed itself to establishing meaningful partnerships with tobacco prevention efforts and dental providers, to reduce oral health illnesses related to tobacco use.

Fresno LOHP joined the Fresno County Tobacco-Free Coalition and maintains a partnership with the local Fresno County Tobacco Prevention Program. Together, Fresno LOHP has integrated their outreach strategies, which expands the reach of oral health educational messaging and distribution of hygiene kits throughout the community. Both programs have leveraged social media campaigns proven to be successful from Smile California and Tobacco Education Clearinghouse Center to promote dental hygiene and tobacco cessation on the Healthy Fresno County social media platforms. By using promotional marketing techniques and paid media campaigns, Fresno LOHP has been able to increase online engagement and share oral health resources throughout the county.

To bridge the communication gap between Fresno LOHP and dental providers, the program is utilizing the partnership with their regional Medical Dental Provider Relations Representative. This representative maintains regular interactions with dental providers who serve Medi-Cal patients and has begun assessing the level of interest among dental professionals in delivering comprehensive tobacco cessation services.

Looking towards the future, Fresno LOHP plans to increase the amount of tobacco cessation counselor trainings and resources for Fresno County's dental providers and increase the number of residents utilizing the State Cessation services. Fresno LOHP is also working towards enhancing care coordination services to Fresno County residents by leveraging the existing community health worker network interventions and linking interested clients to tobacco cessation services and/or a local dental provider.

Email DentalDirector@cdph.ca.gov to suggest future articles and provide feedback.

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