

# TOOTH BE TOLD

**SJ TEETH NEWSLETTER**



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## Welcome to *Tooth Be Told* - Fall 2021

The San Joaquin County Public Health Services (PHS) Local Oral Health Program (LOHP) continues to support oral health partners throughout the county by sharing resources and planning upcoming activities, including:

- Planning and distributing 1,400 dental kits and children's books to SJC WIC for their Emergency Supplies Drive-Through event in September (image right),
- Completing a webinar for dental professionals entitled, "Sugar-sweetened beverages and the dental team's role in nutrition education," promoting awareness of the **Rethink Your Drink** campaign materials, and
- Engaging schools with a high percentage of students who qualify for the Free-Reduced Price Meal (FRPM) program to offer dental screenings for the 2021-2022 school year.



First 5 San Joaquin continues their dedication to improving oral health of children and families throughout the county by securing funding for educational media campaigns and needed services, like dental care coordination.

# SJ TEETH CARE COORDINATION IS BACK!

SJ TEETH funded program partners return for another year of helping local families access dental care. These partners include: Asian Pacific Self-Development And Residential Association (APSARA), El Concilio, Catholic Charities, Family Resource & Referral Center, and Family Resource Network.

Funded by First 5 San Joaquin, these care coordinators serve families of children 0-5 years with Medi-Cal dental coverage to overcome barriers to care. They help find dentists, make appointments, and provide information on additional dental services.

Based on a health equity approach, Katie Andrew, Senior Policy and Outreach Associate with Children Now, explains how care coordination "must go beyond a referral to a provider and include supports tailored to patient's needs that remove barriers to care" including help with appointments, transportation, translations, reminder calls, day-of appointment support, and post-appointment follow-up.

SJ TEETH care coordinators hit all these marks and more, connecting nearly 4,000 children to dental services since 2017.

For more information about SJ TEETH Care Coordination, visit [SJTEETH.org/CareCoordination](http://SJTEETH.org/CareCoordination).



## QUICK BITES

- The [June 2021 factsheet](#) published by the National WIC association (NWA), highlights California's Oral Health Plan as a comprehensive 10-year plan that could "serve as a model for others."
- [California Advancing & Innovating Medi-Cal \(CalAIM\) Dental](#), initially built on the Dental Transformation Initiative (DTI), expands reimbursement throughout the state. This program will begin in January 2022.
- New "[Oral Health & Health Equity](#)" infographic from National Institutes for Health Care Management (NIHCM) available for download.



# HEALTHY TEETH, HAPPY START

Healthy teeth are an important part of school readiness. Cavities, which are largely preventable, remain the most common chronic childhood disease and a major contributor to chronic absenteeism.

Regular dental care and early detection of dental problems can help children stay healthy and ready to learn. SJ TEETH is encouraging parents and caregivers to prioritize scheduling a dental check-up for their children.

The Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment (KOHA) is an oral health screening required by May 31 in either kindergarten or first grade, whichever is their first year in school. KOHA focuses on helping families find a dental home for their child to lower student absenteeism. It also provides valuable information to schools, local health officials, and oral health advocacy groups to learn more about factors that affect student performance and inform local program planning.

Early on in the KOHA mandate, San Joaquin County showed 14 out of 15 districts reporting data during the 2006-2007 school year.

However, a downward trend has emerged year-over-year, with only four of 15 districts entering data for the 2020-2021 school year.

To help increase compliance and assist local school with KOHA reporting, the San Joaquin LOHP developed a [KOHA Toolkit](#) in early 2020 and began training school health personnel throughout the county.

As we move forward into the 2021-2022 school year, we encourage all school districts to report KOHA data directly to the System for California Oral Health Reporting (SCOHR) website and contact PHS LOHP at [SJTEETH@sjcphs.org](mailto:SJTEETH@sjcphs.org) with questions or technical assistance requests.

Schools can also share information about KOHA with parents by using the new SJ TEETH KOHA flyer, [Healthy Start, Happy Teeth](#) featuring Stella, the saber-toothed tiger.

Visit the [SJ TEETH website](#) for more educational resources, including a list of dental providers who accept Medi-Cal.



# Oral Health Status of Children

## RESULTS OF THE 2018-2019 CALIFORNIA THIRD GRADE SMILE SURVEY

In 2018 and 2019, the California Department of Public Health conducted the California Smile Survey (CSS), a population-based, representative survey of 12,562 third-grade children. Results of the survey show that in California, tooth decay remains a significant public health problem, especially for minority and socioeconomically disadvantaged groups.

The report highlights:

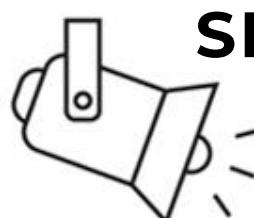
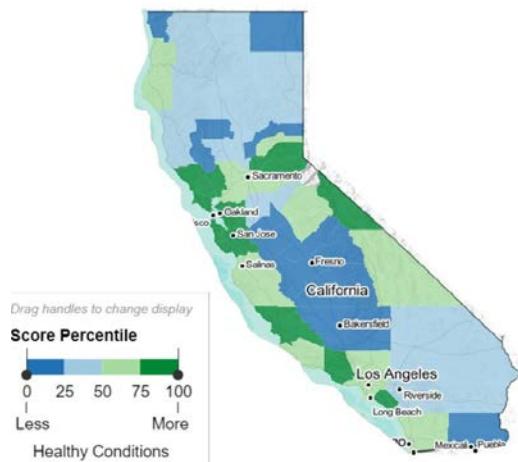
- Latinx children across the state with the highest prevalence of tooth decay\* (72%)
- African American children with highest prevalence of untreated decay\* (25.8%).
- San Joaquin Valley region with the highest prevalence of tooth decay (75.9%) and untreated decay (29.7%) compared to other regions of the state (image top right).

This regional disparity mirrors that of the Healthy Place Index (image to right), where the Central Valley scores in the lowest percentile for conditions of healthy living. Read more about the California Smile Survey in the May 2021 issue of the [California Dental Association journal](#).

### Caries Experience



### Healthy Place Index



## SPOTLIGHT ON STELLA

First 5 San Joaquin and PHS LOHP continue to develop new ways to bring Stella to the community. Stella and her brother share two-othy tips in our new poster, "Good Things Come in 2s!" This poster is perfect for schools, libraries, dental clinics, pediatric offices, and more. Request a poster or two for your agency or to share with your community!

\* "Untreated Decay" is identified when a child has an *active cavity* that has not yet been treated and "Tooth Decay" is identified when a child has ever had a cavity (whether it is treated or untreated)

# SJ TEETH Collaborative Meeting Dates

MEETINGS HOSTED BY: FIRST 5 SAN JOAQUIN AND  
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES LOCAL ORAL HEALTH PROGRAM

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Friday, November 19, 2021	9:00AM - 11:00AM	Online via TEAMS/ZOOM
Friday, February 18, 2022	9:00AM - 11:00AM	Online via TEAMS/ZOOM
Friday, May 20, 2022	9:00AM - 11:00AM	Online via TEAMS/ZOOM
Friday, August 19, 2022	9:00AM - 11:00AM	Online via TEAMS/ZOOM

*Note: Meetings scheduled via video conference due to COVID-19 restrictions and subject to change.*

## COVID-19 QUICK FACTS

- COVID-19 is still a threat. Viruses constantly change through mutation forming new variants. The COVID-19 vaccine is our best tool in stopping the development of new variants and ending the pandemic.
- COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective at preventing people from getting seriously ill, being hospitalized, or death.
- It is safe for children ages 12-18 to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. Parental consent is needed for individuals under 18.
- None of the COVID-19 vaccines contain the virus, so they can NOT give you or a child COVID-19.

**Tooth Be Told** strives to share success stories, challenges, and oral health related news. If you have comments, suggestions, or want to update your email preferences, contact [SJTEETH@sjcphs.org](mailto:SJTEETH@sjcphs.org).

For more program information, visit [www.sjteeth.org](http://www.sjteeth.org) or [www.sjcphs.org/healthed/Oral\\_Health](http://www.sjcphs.org/healthed/Oral_Health).