

Douglas B. Keck, D.M.D.

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Dear Colleagues,

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) is partnering with the Office of Head Start (OHS) to provide “dental homes” to children from birth to age five who may otherwise go without care. The term “dental home” refers to an ongoing relationship between a dentist and patient, inclusive of all aspects of oral health care delivery in a comprehensive, continuously accessible, coordinated and family-centered way. This can only be accomplished by involving all dentists in the State of Connecticut, not just pediatric dentists.

Becoming a “dental home” for these young children will help many children who are in desperate need of oral health care, and will demonstrate to the public that we are making great strides to increase access to dental care in Connecticut.

This program will recruit dentists to provide “dental homes” for Head Start children throughout the United States. The initiative will allow for Head Start and Early Head Start children to access oral health care through the development of a national network of pediatric and general dentists. As the Connecticut State Leader of this initiative, it is my responsibility to recruit dentists to the program, train dentists and Head Start personnel in coordination of care of these children, and to assist Head Start and Early Head Start programs in obtaining comprehensive oral health services for their students. Lastly, the AAPD/OHS collaboration will help provide parents, caregivers and Head Start staff with the latest evidenced-based information on how they can help prevent tooth decay and establish a foundation for a lifetime of oral health.

I respectfully ask all those involved with COHI to become involved in this worthwhile Head Start initiative. COHI has made great strides in furthering access to oral health throughout Connecticut. Please consider becoming a “champion” of oral health by becoming involved with these deserving Head Start children.

If you are willing to become involved, please contact me at dougkeck@earthlink.net or at 203-245-1454. I will be very pleased to make introductions and provide any necessary training to make these collaborations work.

Thank you on behalf of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry and the Office of Head Start.

In better oral health,

Douglas B. Keck, D.M.D.