

# CHIP starts with a Smile

CHIP's Oral Health Initiative:  
Healthy Teeth for a Brighter Future

## Children in America lose 52 million hours of school each year due to dental problems.

Dental problems are the most common unmet health need for children in the U.S. Children are more than four times more likely to experience dental

issues than asthma. Children with untreated dental decay are in pain, have trouble eating, sleeping, concentrating, and may have impaired speech development. These factors can all affect a child's ability to succeed in school.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children see a dentist before age one, **yet only 6% of Medicaid-enrolled children in Virginia see a dentist before age three.** 30% of low-income children in pre-school have untreated dental decay, compared with just 6% of pre-school children whose families have higher incomes.

### OUR MISSION:

To improve young children's health and promote wellness and self-sufficiency in low-income families, through partnerships with local communities.



Having a healthy smile makes everything better—from eating and sleeping to talking and learning.

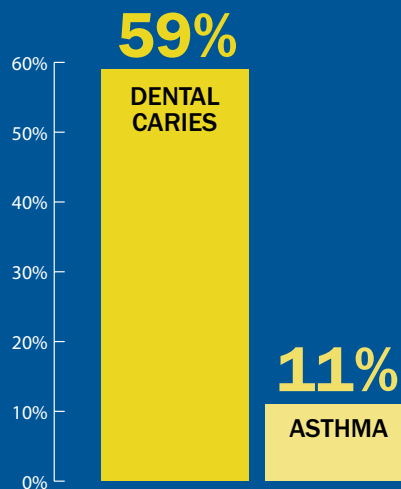
children and teach healthy brushing techniques to parents and their children. **Children who receive fluoride varnish treatments are four times less likely to have tooth decay than children not receiving treatments.**

*continued on reverse*

### How CHIP Helps.

CHIP of Virginia, a statewide network of local home visiting programs that works to improve the health of young children in low-income families, partnered with the Virginia Department of Health (Division of Dental Health) to implement CHIP's Oral Health Initiative. This program focuses on improving dental health for 1,300 low-income children, aged 6 months to 3 years, in 30 localities in Virginia. CHIP nurses apply fluoride varnish treatments for young

### Percentage of Children Affected by Health-Related Issues



Learning how to brush properly is the foundation for good oral health.

continued from front:

CHIP of Roanoke Valley was the first local CHIP site to have a dental varnish program. Carol Huffman, the site's Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, has led the local effort while also promoting the program with CHIP staff in other communities.

In 2008, the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau awarded CHIP of Roanoke Valley a Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children grant based on their success.

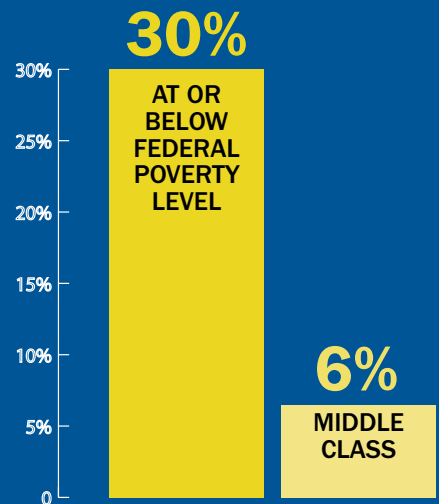


“ We have a large population of Latino families in our service area. We have found that in the Latino culture using a bottle until the age of 3 or 4 is not unusual. Unfortunately this causes baby bottle tooth decay. By educating our families we are finding that they are weaning the children from the bottle much earlier (usually by 12–15 months). The families ask when I am coming out next to apply the varnish as they are very excited about providing good dental care for their children. **Many of the parents have had major dental problems and do not want their children to endure the same issues.**”

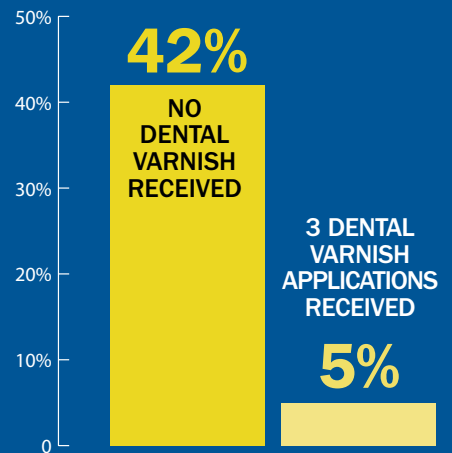
— Kelley MacArthur  
Nurse, CHIP of Williamsburg



Children with Untreated Dental Caries (Cavities) by Family Income:



Impact of Dental Varnish on Decay Percent of Low-Income Children with Caries after 2 Years:



Fluoride Varnish Efficacy in Preventing Early Childhood Caries (2006).  
J.A. Weintraub, et al., Journal of Dental Research. 85(2), 172-176.



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