

“First Tooth” Training Glossary of Terms



American Dental Association (ADA): Professional association represents the specialty of pediatric dentistry and promotes good oral health to the public.

American Academy Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD): Membership organization representing the specialty of pediatric dentistry.

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP): Membership organization of pediatricians committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults

Abscess: Infection caused by tooth decay

Anticipatory Guidance: A proactive developmentally based counseling technique that focuses on the needs of a child at each stage of life. Practical, timely information for parents and other caregivers allows them to anticipate impending changes and maximize their child's oral and general health potential.

Bacterial Endocarditis: An infection in the lining of the heart caused when bacteria in the bloodstream lodge on heart tissue that has been damaged or on an abnormal heart valve.

Best Practice: Service, function, or process that has been fine-tuned, improved and implemented to produce superior results that demonstrate impact/effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and collaboration/integration.

Caries: the process of cavity formation from demineralization to an actual hole, or cavity, in the tooth.

Cariogenic: bacteria or foods that contribute to the caries process. Primary cariogenic bacteria are mutans streptococcus and lactobacillus. Primary cariogenic foods include sweet or sticky carbohydrates.

Cavity: The lesion or hole created in the tooth by the decay process.

Chlorohexidine: An antimicrobial rinse prescribed to lower bacterial counts in the mouth.

Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN): Those who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.

Cultural Competence: In health care describes the ability of systems to provide care to patients with diverse values, beliefs and behaviors, including tailoring delivery to meet patients' social, cultural, and linguistic needs.

Dental Care Organization (DCO): - A Prepaid Health Plan (PHP) that provides and coordinates capitated dental services.

Demineralization: The process of removing minerals, in the form of mineral ions, from dental enamel. Demineralization is another term for “dissolving the enamel.” It occurs when the bacteria that are normally found in the mouth use the sugars and carbohydrates from the food we eat to produce acids that dissolve the tooth structure, depleting it of calcium and phosphate.

Dental Home: Dental care to infants, children and adults that is continuous, comprehensive, family centered, coordinated, compassionate, and culturally effective. It should be delivered by well-trained dental professional who implement preventive dental health habits that meet each child’s unique needs and keep the child free from oral disease.

Division of Medical Assistance Programs (DMAP): The Division of the Department is responsible for coordinating Medical Assistance Programs, including the OHP Medicaid Demonstration, in Oregon and CHIP.

Early Childhood Caries (ECC): The process of cavity formation in young children, also known as “baby bottle caries,” “bottle mouth,” or “baby bottle tooth decay.” The disease of ECC is the presence of 1 or more decayed (noncavitated or cavitated lesions), missing (due to caries), or filled tooth surfaces in any primary tooth in a child 71 months of age or younger.

Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs): Designated by Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) as having shortages of primary medical care, dental or mental health providers and may be geographic (a county or service area), demographic (low income population) or institutional (comprehensive health center, federally qualified health center or other public facility).

Health Literacy: The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.

Fluorosis: The result of ingesting too much fluoride when teeth are forming, most often resulting in a lacey pattern in the permanent teeth.

Fluoride: A compound of the element fluorine. Fluorine, the 13th most abundant element in nature, is used in a variety of ways to reduce dental decay.

Medicaid: A federal and state funded portion of the Medical Assistance Program established by Title XIX of the Social Security Act, as amended, and administered in Oregon by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHS)>

Motivational Interviewing: Also referred to as patient or client-centered counseling. A client-centered directive method for enhancing intrinsic motivation to change by exploring and resolving ambivalence.

Mutans Streptococci: Cariogenic bacteria found in dental plaque and one of two index organisms (*Lactobacillus* is the other) used to assess caries susceptibility.

Oral Health Literacy: Based on the definition of health literacy, the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic oral and craniofacial health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.

Oral Health Risk Assessment (Caries Risk Assessment): Identifying an infant's or child's risk or protective factors that may impact oral health.

Oral Cavity: Mouth

Oral Health Program: A program within the Oregon Public Health Division's Office of Family Health, addresses oral health needs through a comprehensive approach that includes implementing best practices to build the capacity for state, counties, and local communities to adequately and appropriately address the myriad of oral health needs of Oregonians.

Oregon Oral Health Coalition (OROHC): A 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that provides central support and leadership to professional and advocacy groups, local and state government agencies, other entities and organizations within Oregon.

Oregon Health Plan (OHP): The Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance (CHIP) Demonstration Project which expands Medicaid and CHIP eligibility to eligible OHP clients.

Pediatric Dentist: A dentist who specializes in the care and treatment of children. Also known as a pedodontist.

Periodontal disease: Also known as gum disease, periodontal disease is caused by infection and inflammation of the gingiva (gum), the periodontal connective tissues and the alveolar bone, which can lead to tooth loss.

Plaque: Soft biofilm of colonizing bacteria and bacterial by-products that forms on the teeth and tongue.

Remineralization: The process of replacing the essential minerals lost from teeth by demineralization.

Risk Factor: A variable associated with an increased risk of disease or infection.

Socioeconomic Status: The position of an individual on a socio-economic scale that measures such factors as education, income, type of occupation, place of residence, and in some populations, ethnicity and religion.

White Spots: The first visible sign of the caries process. At this stage, aggressive intervention with fluoride varnish and behavior modification can actually reverse the caries process.

Xylitol: A "tooth friendly" nonfermentable sugar alcohol with indicated dental health benefits in caries prevention.