



# County of Santa Cruz



## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY Public Health Division

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### Press Release

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For Immediate Release  
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### **FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH (CDHM)**

Every February, the American Dental Association (ADA), observes National Children's Dental Health Month to bring together thousands of dedicated professionals, healthcare providers, and educators to promote the benefits of good oral health for children.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cavities, also known as tooth decay, are the most common chronic disease in the United States during childhood. If left untreated, cavities cause pain and infections that can lead to problems with speaking, playing, eating, and learning. The good news is that tooth decay is preventable.

"Dientes has been proud to bring high-quality and compassionate dental care to the children in our community for over 30 years! We are pleased to announce that we are accepting new pediatric patients and have available appointments at our Commercial Way clinic," said Dr. Sepideh Taghvaei, Executive VP of Operations of Dientes Community Dental Care.

#### **Schedule your child's next dental appointment today:**

- **Dientes Community Dental Care:** Call 831-464-5409 or visit <https://dientes.org/>
- **Salud Para La Gente (Salud) is hosting a free Children's Dental Care Day on Saturday, February 22nd.** To reserve your spot for this event or schedule an appointment, call or text 831-728-0222. For more information about their services, visit [www.splg.org](http://www.splg.org).

"Families in our community are fortunate to have such a strong network of partners focus on oral health, from Santa Cruz County's Local Oral Health Program (LOHP) to our Oral Health Access (OHA) Steering Committee. Together these 24 organizations are

working to make a real impact on improving the oral health of our county residents,” said Sheree Storm, Chief Strategy Officer of Dientes Community Dental Care. “Over the past eight years, our local efforts have contributed to the decrease in cavities among kinder-aged children from 24% in 2014 to 18% in 2019 while increasing dental visits for children ages 0-2 from 36% in 2015 to 57% in 2019. For more information, see our [OHA Needs Assessment, 2022.](#)”

The LOHP and OHA partners are hosting a social media campaign that focuses on children’s oral health education reminders and milestones for caregivers and families the entire month of February. **Follow us on Instagram and Facebook @publichealthsc.**

Each week will consist of messages around the following themes:

- Every infant should visit the dentist by their first tooth and no later than their first birthday, and with Semillitas college savings accounts, your Santa Cruz County-born child can earn money for going to the dentist! For more information visit: <https://www.semillitas.org/milestone-directory>
- Kinder Oral Health Assessment (KOHA) reminders for kids entering public school.
- Improving oral health access for children with school-based dental programs by Dientes Community Dental Care and Salud Para La Gente.
- Healthy habits for healthy smiles; routine oral health hygiene dental visits.

For more information about the Local Oral Health Program visit: [Healthy Smiles \(santacruzhealth.org\)](#). For information on the Oral Health Access Steering Committee visit: <https://oralhealthsc.org/> or <https://www.healthysmilessc.org/>

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