Why oral health matters for children

- Dental care is the most prevalent unmet health need of children in the United States.¹
- The average child has three decayed teeth by the age of 3.²
- 40 percent of children entering kindergarten will have tooth decay.³
- Preschoolers living in poverty are twice as likely to experience tooth decay and twice as likely to have dental pain compared to preschoolers from families living above the federal poverty level.⁴
- In Tarrant County, more than 47,000 children age 5 and under did not get a general exam by a dentist in the past 12 months.⁵

² American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, Get It Done In Year One, July 28, 2010. Retrieved from aapd.org/assets/2/7/GetItDoneInYearOne.pdf.
⁴ Edelstein, B. L., Dental Care Considerations for Young Children, 2002, Spec. Care Dentist.
⁵ Community-wide Children’s Health Assessment & Planning Survey (CCHAPS), 2015.

The Children’s Oral Health Coalition, led by Cook Children’s, was organized in 1999 to improve the oral health of children ages 0–8 in Tarrant County with a special focus on underserved children. Coalition members from more than 40 local organizations help promote the education, prevention, awareness and advocacy for children’s oral health issues.

To reserve a seat for an upcoming Train the Trainer oral health workshop, please email elaine.vivens@cookchildrens.org.
Train the Trainer is a free 4-hour workshop that introduces the basics of oral health in a small group setting and is taught by a dentist or dental hygienist. The workshop is a unique way to learn the importance of oral health and how it impacts overall health in a fun, engaging environment with hands-on activities.

Train the Trainer gives you the opportunity to join a growing group of oral health ambassadors who are committed to teaching oral health to parents and pregnant women on a regular basis during the year.

Goals for the training are to:
- Improve your knowledge about children’s oral health.
- Demonstrate effective teaching methods.
- Increase confidence when educating families about oral health.

Training is for community professionals in Tarrant County working with low-income families with young children (up to age 8) and pregnant women.

As an Oral Health Ambassador, you will have access to a teaching toolkit and other resources to do the following:
- Explain how mouth health is connected to overall health.
- Inform pregnant mothers why oral health matters during pregnancy.
- Demonstrate proper oral health basics – wiping infant gums, brushing, flossing, choosing the right size toothbrush and how to make brushing fun.
- Prepare parents for their child’s first dental visit by age 1.
- Help parents choose foods and drinks that are healthy for teeth and gums.