

A Rich History and Promising Future

As the new associate editor for the *Journal of Dentistry for Children* (JDC), I would like to express my enthusiasm for being offered the opportunity to serve the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD), our readers and the children whose care we provide. I am honored to be associated with a journal with such a rich history and dedicated readership. Anyone who has been a regular subscriber to JDC knows that I have big shoes to fill. There have been many distinguished editors before me including Samuel D. Harris, Walter McBride, George Teuscher, Jimmy R. Pinkham and Paul S. Casamassimo. I plan to do my best to live up to the standards they set and guide JDC into the future.

In preparing to take over the editorship of this journal, I went to the library to see when JDC was first published and what the editor at that time had to say. The first issue was published in 1933. At the time, it was called *Review of Dentistry for Children* and was the publication for the American Society for the Promotion of Dentistry for Children. The president of the society was Haidee Weeks. The first editors were Drs. Samuel D. Harris and Walter McBride. In those early issues, the president had a column that addressed issues pertinent to that time. Guest editors were invited to write a column on other topics of interest.

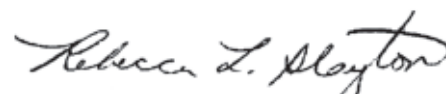
I found it interesting to see what the articles in those early journals focused on. Dental caries was a significant problem. Although the data was presented differently than it is today, it was clear that caries was a disease that affected almost all children to some degree. Today, we commonly report that 20% of the children have 80% of the decay. There were also discussions about how to encourage physicians to include a dental examination with a child's physical examination. That effort continues today.

A statement by Dr. Weeks in that first issue of the journal really made an impression on me because it remains true today. He said, "Prevention is the greatest word in the world of

science today. Prevention and dentistry for children are synonymous and prevention starts with the tiny child. We are the preceptors of prevention, and let us see that the child is given the birthright it deserves and to which it is so rightfully entitled, a perfect mouth." We have made a difference in the lives of so many children over the years. It is a tribute to our profession that the majority of children today mature into adulthood with healthy teeth. Now we must turn our attention to that 20% who are at the highest risk and who, in spite of all our efforts, develop severe, debilitating dental disease.

It is always interesting and sometimes educational to look back in time. However, if we are interested in making changes for the future, we need to start with the present. When the AAPD and the American Society of Dentistry for Children merged, the AAPD and its members had to decide if it would continue to publish two journals. It was clear that the majority of members wanted to keep both journals. One of my missions as associate editor, in collaboration with Editor-in-chief Steven M. Adair, the Executive Committee and AAPD members, is to determine what JDC should look like in the years to come. What type of articles should we be soliciting? How often should the journal be published? Should the overall appearance of the journal be changed? I welcome your ideas and feedback. I recognize that criticism comes with a job like this and I ask that you be constructive in your comments.

My goal is for this to be a high quality journal that you look forward to reading and that you are proud to have as one of the journals representing our profession. I look forward to the challenges this position is sure to bring.



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