



On November 11 and 12, 2005, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) held the Symposium on the Prevention of Oral Diseases in Children and Adolescents. Fifteen speakers, 5 expert panelists and an audience of over 200 came together to explore the essence of what pediatric dentists do on a daily basis. Contained within this issue of *Pediatric Dentistry* are reviews written by each speaker and the clinical, research, and policy implications that emerged from the Symposium as identified by the expert panelists. We gratefully acknowledge the support in part from Pfizer, Inc, which made this Symposium possible.

When then AAPD President, Paul Reggiardo, conceived the Symposium in 2003, his instructions were clear:

1. bring together communities of interest including policy makers, scientists and practitioners;
2. define the state of the art;
3. disseminate the most current information to our members so that they can provide the best care for their patients;
4. identify existing gaps in our knowledge;
5. make recommendations that will enhance clinical practice, oral health education, research, and public policy;
6. enhance the stature of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry.

The Symposium Planning Committee, consisting of Tegwyn Brickhouse, Steve Chan, Leslie Lawrence, and AnnaMarie Malavolti, selected the topics and invited the most respected people in their fields to be speakers.

During the Symposium, Jim Crall delivered a global perspective on prevention drawing on his extensive cariology and public policy experience. Jessica Lee presented state of the art health services research that clearly demonstrated significant cost savings when children visit the dentist early in life. John Featherstone presented the concept that caries is a balance between pathologic and protective factors. From the perspective of pediatric dentist and microbiologist, Ann Griffen and Bob Berkowitz delivered contemporary reviews of the commensal nature of oral microflora, plaque as a

biofilm, the transmission of bacteria from caregiver to child, and the microbiological etiology of caries and periodontal disease. Larry Tabak presented a thorough review of how salivary secretions protect us from disease, and he gave us a futuristic look into salivary diagnostics. Steve Adair presented a thought-provoking evidence-based review of all fluoride modalities. Kevin Donly presented the literature that supports the use of sealants and practical tips to improve their retention. Peter Milgrom presented the evidence to support using xylitol in private practice and public health settings to reduce caries. Sibylle Kranz, who directed the recent nationally acclaimed study on diet quality in children, delivered a humorous and informative presentation on children's diets, childhood obesity, and healthy feeding tips for our patients. Phil Weinstein discussed how best to motivate our patients, and Diane Cummins discussed the process by which industry brings preventive products to market. David Albert made a persuasive argument that tobacco prevention and cessation counseling should be a part of our everyday routine. Max Anderson and Wenyan Shi discussed the probiotic approach to caries control and how nanotechnology is being used to develop chairside diagnostic tools.

The expert panelists – Paul Casamassimo, Steve Chan, Bob Feigal, Man Wai Ng and Paul Reggiardo – identified themes among the various presentations, probed the speakers for additional information, stimulated the discussion, and addressed the many questions submitted by the audience.

I hope that you will enjoy reading this issue. As pediatric dentists, we can be proud of the fact that we continue to advocate for the most vulnerable, and that we are open to new knowledge, techniques and materials that will improve the oral health of the infants, children, and adolescents whom we are blessed to serve.

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