

Definition of Dental Neglect

Originating Committee
Child Abuse Committee

Review Council
Council on Clinical Affairs

Adopted
1983

Revised
1987, 1992

Reaffirmed
1996, 2001, 2006

Dental caries, periodontal diseases, and other oral conditions, if left untreated, can lead to pain, infection, and loss of function. These undesirable outcomes can adversely affect learning, communication, nutrition, and other activities necessary for normal growth and development.

Dental neglect is willful failure of parent or guardian to seek and follow through with treatment necessary to ensure a level of oral health essential for adequate function and freedom from pain and infection.

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