

## FINDING AFFORDABLE DENTAL CARE

Getting to the dentist is important – perhaps more important than many of us realize. According to the *American Dental Association*, certain forms of dental disease may be linked to problems such as heart disease, stroke and pneumonia. The *American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry* recommends that children see a dentist at least twice a year. Of course, this is easier said than done. Families across the country struggle to find affordable dental care and grandfamilies are no exception.

If you're struggling to get dental care for your child, don't be discouraged. There are resources out there that can help. Maine Kids-Kin has gathered some information on a few of these resources. If you would like to learn more, please give us a call.

- **MaineCare:** If your child has MaineCare, he is covered for some dental services. MaineCare covers routine cleanings, preventive treatment, and more. If your child needs to see an orthodontist (for braces, retainers, etc.), he will need written approval beforehand. To request approval, call 1-800-321-5557.

Not all dentists accept MaineCare. However, there are several resources to help you find one who does:

**MaineCare Member Services** can help you find a dentist who accepts MaineCare, make an appointment, and arrange transportation. They are also available to answer questions about MaineCare benefits. Their toll-free phone number is 1-800-977-6740 (TDD/TYY 1-800-977-6741).

**Dental Clinics & Services for Maine Residents** is a directory published by the DHHS Oral Health program. It lists dentists from each county who accept MaineCare. It also contains information on other resources. The directory is updated every two years. To get a copy, go to <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/bohdcfh/odh/resources.shtml>, or call Maine Kids-Kin.

To apply for MaineCare, or for more information, contact your nearest DHHS office, or call toll-free at 1-877-543-7669. (Also, read our MaineCare tip sheet, at <http://www.mainekids-kin.org/tipsheets.html>).

- **Tooth Fairy, Inc. (TFI):** TFI works with participating public schools and Head Starts in central and southern Maine. They provide low-income children with preventive dental services (cleanings, sealants, etc.). TFI accepts MaineCare. Services for children without MaineCare normally cost \$42. If your child does not have MaineCare and you cannot afford the normal \$42 cost, special arrangements can be made. *In order to receive services from TFI, your child must attend a participating school.* To find out if your child's school works with TFI, ask the school nurse, or call TFI at 207-754-8487 for more information.
- **Healthy Smiles for ME:** Healthy Smiles for ME helps children without MaineCare find emergency dental care. *In order to work with Healthy Smiles for ME, your child must go to a school that works with TFI* (see above). For more information, talk to your child's school nurse, or call 207-754-8487.
- **Maine Dental Health Out-Reach, Inc. (MDHO):** MDHO works with participating schools in Winthrop and the surrounding area. They provide eligible students with preventive dental services (cleanings, sealants, etc.). MDHO accepts MaineCare. For children without MaineCare, there are small fees associated with different services. For more information, visit the MDHO website at [www.mdho.org](http://www.mdho.org) *In order to receive services from MDHO, your child must attend a participating school*

**Remember, these are only some of the resources available to families searching for dental care. If you would like to learn about other resources, please contact Maine Kids-Kin.**

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