



ORAL HEALTH KANSAS

Marcia Manter, Community Development Specialist
785 235 6039 mmanter@oralhealthkansas.org
For Immediate Release: September 4, 2012

IT'S NOT JUST A TOOTHACHE! TOOTH PROBLEMS REDUCE CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE AT SCHOOL

Current research shows that children who are suffering because of tooth decay are more likely to struggle to be successful in school. The Pew Charitable Trusts Children's Dental Campaign recently released research documenting the link between poor oral health and poor school performance. Here is one finding: *Children who reported having recent tooth pain were four times more likely to have a low grade-point average—below the median GPA of 2.8—when compared to children who had not had dental pain.*

Think about what it feels like to have a toothache as an adult -- throbbing pain that robs you of sleep, no energy at work and loss of appetite. It is a miserable experience. Children have the same reactions except that they usually can't find words to express their pain and suffering.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has this to say: "Untreated tooth decay (in children) causes pain and infections that may lead to problems; such as eating, speaking, playing, and learning." In fact, when tooth decay goes untreated, children are at risk for other infections and illness.

Please join Kansas Cavity Free Kids, Oral Health Kansas and Kansas Bureau of Oral Health in our battle to keep all Kansas children cavity-free and ready to learn.

- Be alert for signs that children have pain and swelling in the mouth
- Conduct an open-mouth screening to spot tooth decay and broken teeth
- Contact families immediately to report signs of problems
- Work with families who need help finding dental services

For more information...

<http://www.pewstates.org/news-room/press-releases/dental-problems-affect-school-performance-85899411361>

<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chdcollier/Documents/ToothFairy/oralhealthandlearning.pdf>