

disease.

Families that struggle with lower incomes, homelessness, and migrant status generally lack the resources to provide their children with adequate food intake, nutritious foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, and appropriate protein intake ([Flores and Lesley, 2014](#)). The result is nutritional deficiencies with subsequent growth and developmental delays, depression, and behavior problems.

Oral Health

Oral health is an essential component of health promotion throughout infancy, childhood, and adolescence. Preventing dental caries and developing healthy oral hygiene habits must occur early in childhood. Dental caries is the single most common chronic disease of childhood. In the most recent National Surveys of Children's Health, minority children experience disparities in oral health care and were much more likely to have dental disease ([Flores and Lin, 2013](#)). The most common form of early dental disease is early childhood caries, which may begin before the first birthday and progress to pain and infection within the first 2 years of life ([Kagihara, Niederhauser, and Stark, 2009](#)). Preschoolers of low-income families are twice as likely to develop tooth decay and only half as likely to visit the dentist as other children. Early childhood caries is a preventable disease, and nurses play an essential role in educating children and parents about practicing dental hygiene, beginning with the first tooth eruption; drinking fluoridated water, including bottled water; and instituting early dental preventive care. Oral health care practices established during the early years of development prevent destructive periodontal disease and dental decay.

Childhood Health Problems

Changes in modern society, including advancing medical knowledge and technology, the proliferation of information systems, struggles with insurance disparities, economically troubled times, and various changes and disruptive influences on the family, are leading to significant medical problems that affect the health of children ([Berdahl, Friedman, McCormick, et al, 2013](#); [Leslie, Slaw, Edwards, et al, 2010](#)). The new morbidity, also known