

Hi Carol,

I enjoy reading your in-depth health pieces (including your article last week about healthcare coverage in Washington state), and thought that this story might interest you.

Kids and cavities seem to have become synonymous with one another, with the increasing consumption of candy and sugary drinks. This seems benign enough, but I was surprised to learn that dental decay is actually the single most common chronic disease among children in the U.S.

If left untreated, dental decay can result in pain, delayed learning development, behavioral problems, and in very extreme cases, even death. (You might remember the tragic, and highly publicized case of 12-year-old [Deamonte Driver](#), who died from a brain infection that began as a tooth infection in 2007.) While death is rare, serious complications stemming from childhood dental decay are all too common.

But the issue is not all doom and gloom—there is a solution! This often overlooked problem is 100 percent preventable with proper education and access to early childhood dental care. Simple steps like taking infants to the dentist during their first year can make all the difference.

On September 1st, the University of Washington and Seattle Children's Hospital will open the world's first medical center dedicated to children's dental health. The Center for Pediatric Dentistry will educate parents on the importance of infant and childhood dental care and help put childhood dental decay on the national agenda.

I'd like to invite you to the grand opening of The Center for Pediatric Dentistry next week, where you can meet Director Dr. Joel Berg DDS, MS. Dr. Berg can speak directly to the opening of The Center, discuss the dangers of childhood dental decay, and provide helpful prevention tips around early childhood dental health.

Please let me know if you are interested in covering this story and I'll follow up with you shortly!

Best,
Lauren