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2016 SBA InnovateHer Local Competition Statement of Support
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See <http://www.hebetechology.com/safiintro> for a demo of the product.

When the Shepherd Park Christian Church (SPCC) judges selected Hebe Technology as the winner of our 2016 SBA InnovateHer Local Competition on November 30, some of our audience members did not agree with the decision. SPCC received several excellent entries that could be commercialized, that filled a need in the marketplace, and in which the benefits to women were more obvious than they appear to be in Hebe's business plan. Our judges, however, were cognizant of the criterion that the product should benefit women and families, and in this regard, Hebe Technology was a clear winner.

The problem that Hebe's innovative product, SAFI, addresses is enormous. From Hebe's research, we have learned that tooth decay affects approximately 25% of American children between 2 and 5 years old and 50 % of those between 12 and 15 years old. Tooth decay is the number one chronic disease among children ages 5 -18, affecting approximately 59% of this group. American children are losing "more than 51 million hours of school each year due to dental related diseases". The cost of treating tooth decay is rising as it has become the "fourth most expensive disease to treat in most industrialized countries." The problem is not limited to the United States, but globally is "the most common childhood disease and, in most industrialized countries, it affects 60-90% of schoolchildren".

And what of the caregivers, who are almost invariably women, either in single parent or two parent households? When children lose time from school because of dental disease, mothers lose time from work. The high cost of dental care for children can have a devastating effect on family finances and on the working women and men who support the family.

Hebe's approach is to recognize that many instances of tooth decay occur because of the physical inability of children to brush their teeth correctly and because of the inability of parents to do it for them. As primary caregivers, mothers, again, are usually responsible for teaching children to brush their teeth and for doing it for them if the children cannot manage. In households with one parent and several children, the task can be daunting. As a result, the disease of tooth decay continues to plague families.