



**HealthyMouth  
HealthyBody**

# Healthy Mouth Health Body Press Kit



Florida  
**Public  
Health**  
INSTITUTE

Research. Policy. Education.

Developed by the Florida Public Health  
Institute



## **Statewide Messaging Press Tool Kit**

**This Press tool kit was designed by the Florida Public Health Institute with the intention to help advance the Healthy Mouth Health Body statewide messaging campaign. Partners of the messaging workgroup and all oral health advocates may utilize the material in this manual to improve communications strategies to increase public understanding of and public support for programs and policies that aim to improve oral health in our communities.**

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(Sample Draft Letters to the Editor)

Dear Editor,

Florida has received another “F.” This time our state received the failing grade from the Pew Foundation for its efforts to address the persistent and deadly epidemic of poor oral health.

We need your newspaper’s help in raising public awareness about our new campaign: Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body, which provides information on how ORAL diseases impacts OVERALL health.

As a \_\_\_\_\_ and a member of the Florida Oral Health Coalition, we are waging war on dental diseases. Good oral health is important for many reasons:

- Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood infectious disease, and is almost entirely preventable.
- Children in the United States miss more than 52 million school hours each year due to dental disease.
- A bacterial infection in the mouth can result in babies being born prematurely, to an increased chance of having a heart attack and can make blood sugar more difficult to control for people with diabetes.
- Tooth decay is now five times more common than asthma among children. Because oral disease is an infectious disease, if untreated, the problems get worse as children age. On the national level, by the time children reach age 17, four out of five will suffer the consequences of poor oral health.

Fluoride in all forms can help strengthen teeth and prevent tooth decay. Fluoride varnish can be applied by your dentist, hygienist and your child’s pediatrician, so parents should regularly ask their physicians and dental professional for varnish to prevent decay. It’s pain free and very easy to do. In addition, protection provided by water fluoridation costs only pennies per day and offers lifelong protection. We invite all Floridians to join our campaign. Remember, a healthy mouth makes a healthy body. It’s up to all of us to promote oral health for our overall health. The residents of Florida deserve that.

Enter your name, credentials and organization

(Sample Draft Letters to the Editor)

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- A bacterial infection in the mouth can result in babies being born prematurely, to an increased chance of having a heart attack and can make blood sugar more difficult to control for people with diabetes.
- Tooth decay is now five times more common than asthma among children. Because oral disease is an infectious disease, if untreated, the problems get worse as children age. On the national level, by the time children reach age 17, four out of five will suffer the consequences of poor oral health.

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In addition, protection provided by water fluoridation costs only pennies per day and offers lifelong protection. We invite all Floridians to join our campaign. Remember, a healthy mouth makes a healthy body. It’s up to all of us to promote oral health for our overall health. The residents of Florida deserve that. You can learn more about our effort at [www.floridaoralhealth.com](http://www.floridaoralhealth.com).

Enter your name, credentials and organization

Enter credential of the person quoted in the letter

*Sample Email Media Advisor*

Good afternoon,

I am writing today in hopes you might consider visiting the **Name of event** for a very exciting announcement on **Date**.

**Name, credentials and organization**, will announce the new statewide campaign to prevent dental disease, which can lead to other medical complications as well difficulty eating, costly dental visits and missed school.

The State of Florida recently received an “F” from the Pew Foundation for its work in preventing tooth decay, which is the number one chronic illness in children.

At the press conference, **Name** , will be joined by members of the \_\_\_\_\_ County Oral Health Coalition, who will offer insight on the “epidemic” of tooth decay in our youth and what parents can do to promote good oral health and overall body health.

Kindly see the information below and please consider joining us. Please reach \_\_\_\_\_ or me with requests for any additional information and advise if you will attend. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this exciting news story opportunity.

Best regards,

**Name**

-- MEDIA ADVISORY --

Excellent Photo and Interview Opportunity!

**Name of Organization**

**Enter name of event and location**

**Enter Date**

**WHO:** enter who is sponsoring the event and all participants

**WHAT:** Enter what the event is about

**WHEN:** Enter date and time of event

**WHERE:** Enter location address

**WHY:** Enter the reason for the event with a detailed description of the event

**HOW MUCH:**

.

**GENERAL INFO:** For more information

**Photo Identity:** Summit photo of event locations with member of coalition, children etc.

Sample press release

Enter Name of Media Contact

Date

Contact information (include an e-mail

**WAR IS DECLARED ON DENTAL DISEASES IN PALM BEACH COUNTY: NEW  
HEALTHY MOUTH, HEALTHY BODY PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN  
ANNOUNCED**

*Tooth decay is now five times more common in children than asthma.*

With only days before Halloween, the \_\_\_\_\_ warned residents of \_\_\_\_\_ County that the candy treats they eat can play tricks on their oral health and can in turn impact their overall health.

The (Name of Organization) held a Healthy Happy Halloween in conjunction with the (Name of location and/or sponsor) recently when (Name and affiliation) launched a “Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body” campaign in \_\_\_\_\_ County, which has been replicated across Florida. At the Halloween event, which included a press conference to announce the theme of the campaign, (Name) provided statistics on the state of oral health in our state and encouraged parents and children to beware of the effect that dental diseases have on overall body health.

Local community leaders attending the event included \_\_\_\_\_.

List event activities. Members of the \_\_\_\_\_ County Oral Health Coalition were on hand to support the launch of the “Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body” campaign.



(Use if Proclamations will be presented) \_\_\_\_\_ County Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ presented a proclamation to \_\_\_\_\_. Other municipalities \_\_\_\_\_ proclaimed \_\_\_\_\_ to be “Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body Day.”

According to \_\_\_\_\_

- Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood infectious disease, and is almost entirely preventable.
- Children in the United States miss more than 52 million school hours each year due to dental disease.
- The State of Florida has received an “F” from the Pew Foundation for its efforts to address the epidemic of poor oral health.
- A bacterial infection in the mouth can result in babies being born prematurely, to an increased chance of having a heart attack and can make blood sugar more difficult to control for people with diabetes.

Along with the Oral Health Coalition of \_\_\_\_\_ County, and with grants from \_\_\_\_\_ DentaQuest Foundation, (Name and affiliations) chose to wage war on dental diseases in Date.

According to Name, who provided statistics on dental diseases from a county-wide Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body Day event at the location, “We know that chronic tooth pain can not only cause difficulty eating, but can lead to poor school performance. Parents need to remember that good oral health is important for your children for many reasons. Fluoride in all forms can help strengthen teeth and prevent tooth decay. Varnishes can be applied by your

dentist, hygienist and your child’s pediatrician. It’s pain free and very easy to do. Remember, a healthy mouth makes a healthy body.”

### Name and credentials of the coalition representative

The Oral Health Coalition of \_\_\_\_\_ County – represented by \_\_\_\_\_ foundations, non-profit organizations and health care members, wants residents of \_\_\_\_\_ County to know that tooth decay is now five times more common than asthma among children. Because oral disease is an infectious disease, if untreated, the problems get worse as children age. On the national level, by the time children reach age 17, four out of five will suffer the consequences of poor oral health.

“\_\_\_\_\_ County does not have enough of its community water supplies that contain fluoride. Communities such as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ all have no fluoride in their water supply. Protection provided by fluoride costs only pennies per day and offers lifelong protection. And parents should regularly ask their physicians for fluoride varnish to prevent decay.”

As part of the “Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body Day” events, Oral Health Coalition of \_\_\_\_\_ County and the **event sponsor**, hosted a Healthy Happy Halloween event, which included **activities you will have**.

More information on the “Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body” campaign is available at [www.floridaoralhealth.com](http://www.floridaoralhealth.com).

###



***Did you know that preventing dental diseases can help improve your overall health as it relates to chronic disease?***

- Dental disease is almost entirely preventable. Your teeth should last a life time.
- Tooth decay remains the most common chronic, infectious childhood disease
- 52 million school hours are lost each year due to oral health issues
- Poor oral health could increase your chances of developing heart disease
- There is a direct connection between oral infections and adequate control of diabetes
- Gum disease can put a pregnant mother at an eight times higher risk for pre-term birth.
- Employed adults lose more than 164 million hours of work each year due to dental-related absences.

There are many things we can do at home, school and in our community to take charge of our health. The future prosperity of any society depends on its ability to foster the health and well-being of the next generation.

***What you can do at home to help prevent dental disease and promote a healthy body?***

- Tooth decay can be prevented with proper brushing and flossing
- A healthy diet, particularly lower consumption of sugars and increased consumption of fruits and vegetables, can lower your chance of getting cavities
- Don't put your baby to bed with sweet liquid in their bottle, instead use water
- Chew sugar-free gum or rinse if you can't brush between meals

***What we can do in our community to prevent dental disease and promote a healthy body?***

- Implement water fluoridation, fluoride and sealant programs to decrease dental decay
- Promote of oral health in schools aimed at developing healthy lifestyles and self-care practices in children and young people
- Increase public awareness of oral health diseases and the relationship to overall health through community messaging and media campaigns.

The \_\_\_\_\_ became a local initiative in \_\_\_\_\_ and is facilitated by the \_\_\_\_\_. Presently the Coalition is working with over \_\_\_\_\_ community partners to provide oral health resources to the underserved and uninsured populations in \_\_\_\_\_ County. The Coalition

continues to expand its local, state and national partnerships and work on developing strategies centered on oral health disparities. For more information please visit us at [www.healthyfla.com](http://www.healthyfla.com).



## **Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body**

The future prosperity of any society depends on its ability to foster the health and well-being of the next generation. When a society invests wisely in children and families, the next generation will pay back through a lifetime of productivity and responsible citizenship. Innovative states and communities have designed programs that connect people with the preventive care needed to stay healthy. These programs have solved problems of health care access and shown significant long-term improvements for children and their families.

Although it is almost entirely preventable, tooth decay remains the most common chronic childhood infectious disease. Caused by a bacterial infection in the mouth, this infection can spread to other parts of the body if left untreated.

Nationally, children miss more than 52 million school hours each year due to dental disease. By the time they reach the first grade, half of all American children will have a history of this disease. These children have trouble eating, speaking and paying attention in school. Because of this documented and significant loss in their academic performance, there is a national call to make children's oral health a priority.

For adults, new studies have shown that the health consequences of untreated dental disease is more detrimental to overall health than have previously been understood. The effects of poor oral health on the body are associated with heart disease, diabetes, lung disease and the delivery of pre-term and low birth babies.

Chronic diseases and poor birth outcomes may cause lifelong consequences affecting a person's quality of life. Employed adults lose more than 164 million hours of work each year due to dental-related absences. This lost work time can translate into lost income and lost productivity. We can keep Floridians healthy by eliminating dental diseases before they start.

In Florida, the Surgeon General has emphasized the importance of oral health care to overall general health, but much of the population still lacks access to affordable dental services. The Florida Oral Health Coalition has a variety of common-sense solutions to this problem. By working with our schools to offer dental screenings and treatment services on site, we can help to prevent decay from forming and treat existing disease before it spreads. The appropriate use of fluorides, such as fluoride varnishes (a topical fluoride that is painted on the teeth) and water

fluoridation, combined with dental sealants (thin plastic coating applied to the top of the teeth by a dental professional) can prevent up to 90 percent of dental cavities.

Solutions such as these will, in the long run, save our communities money by preventing costly dental treatments and visits to the emergency room when dental decay becomes severe. When communities work together to bring health care prevention and education to all residents we can keep Floridians healthy.



### Sample talking points

- ✚ The \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ County Oral Health Coalition marked a new beginning for residents of \_\_\_\_\_ County recently when they kicked off a public awareness campaign called “Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body,” which focuses on the impact of oral health on overall health. The campaign has been replicated in other communities throughout Florida.
- ✚ Dental disease is almost entirely preventable. Your teeth should last a life time.
- ✚ Tooth decay remains the most common chronic, infectious childhood disease.
- ✚ 52 million school hours are lost each year due to oral health issues.
- ✚ Poor oral health could increase your chances of developing heart disease.
- ✚ There is a direct connection between oral infections and adequate control of diabetes.
- ✚ Gum disease can put a pregnant mother at an eight times higher risk for pre-term birth.
- ✚ Employed adults lose more than 164 million hours of work each year due to dental related absences.
- ✚ The State of Florida has received an “F” from the Pew Foundation for its efforts to prevent dental disease in children.
- ✚ Based on national dental rates, it is estimated that \_\_\_\_\_ County children under age 6 have had tooth decay and that at least \_\_\_\_\_ have untreated dental disease.
- ✚ **Enter any county statistics that are available.**
- ✚ While nationally rates of utilization of Medicaid for dental services have been increasing, they have been declining in Florida. Since 2005, only 13 percent of children with Medicaid have had a preventive dental visit.

Sample of Posters – these can be developed on a power point slide presentation and copied on 4x4 poster board adding your organization logo and the Healthy Mouth Healthy Body logo.

**✚ DID YOU KNOW DENTAL DECAY IS THE MOST CHRONIC CHILDHOOD DISEASE?**

**✚ DID YOU KNOW IT IS 5 TIMES MORE COMMON THAN ASTHMA?**

**✚ DID YOU KNOW DENTAL DECAY IS PREVENTABLE?**

**✚ DID YOU KNOW 52 MILLION SCHOOL HOURS ARE MISSED EACH YEAR DUE TO DENTAL DECAY?**

**✚ DID YOU KNOW THAT FLORIDA RECEIVED AN “F” GRADE WHEN IT COMES TO IMPROVING CHILDREN’S DENTAL HEALTH?**

Develop a power point presentation for your press conference event with the following information:

- ✦ Logo of your organization
- ✦ Logo of Healthy Mouth Healthy Body
- ✦ Sponsor logos
- ✦ Names of coalition members
- ✦ 5 Talking point bullets
- ✦ Mission of your coalition
- ✦ Value statement
- ✦ Issues statewide and local
- ✦ Solutions



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