



AMERICA'S PEDIATRIC DENTISTS
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WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY IN SUPPORT OF HB0771

The **American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD)**¹ strongly supports HB0771, legislation that would make certain that children in Maryland be required to have a **dental exam prior to starting school**. Our understanding is that it is currently required in only four counties in Maryland. Children will not be prevented from going to school, but this law will help families understand the importance of oral health by making this a requirement throughout the state.

HB0771 is consistent with the AAPD's *Policy on School Entrance Oral-Health Examinations*² which includes the following statements:

“The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) encourages policy makers, public health and education officials, and medical and dental communities to recognize that unmet oral health needs can impact a child’s ability to learn. An oral health examination prior to matriculation into school may improve school readiness by providing a timely opportunity for prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of oral conditions.”

“Early detection and management of oral conditions can improve a child’s oral health, general health and well-being, and school readiness.”

The AAPD urges the Maryland General Assembly to adopt this legislation.

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¹ The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) is the recognized authority on children’s oral health. As advocates for children’s oral health, the AAPD promotes evidence-based policies, best practices, and clinical guidelines; educates and informs policymakers, parents and guardians, and other health care professionals; fosters research; and provides continuing professional education for pediatric dentists and general dentists who treat children. Founded in 1947, the AAPD is a not-for-profit professional membership association representing the specialty of pediatric dentistry. Its 11,000 members provide primary care and comprehensive dental specialty treatments for infants, children, adolescents and individuals with special health care needs.

² https://www.aapd.org/globalassets/media/policies_guidelines/p_schoolexms.pdf