



General Dentistry for Kids **and Parents!**

PLEASE DON'T LET THE GOVERNOR ELIMINATE ADULT DENTAL COVERAGE IN CONNECTICUT

We are writing to you today to respectfully urge your support to maintain funding for adult dental coverage which Governor Rell's deficit mitigation proposal would eliminate.

Kool Smiles was founded in 2002 to align with the SCHIP and Medicaid vision of providing high quality dental care to children who might not otherwise have access. By way of background, as a result of the settlement conditions of the longstanding Carr vs. Wilson – Coker dental lawsuit, the State agreed to remove all HUSKY dental services from the managed care system and provide dental services under the management of a single plan by an Administrative Services Organization. Effective September 1, 2008, all participants with HUSKY A and B, Title XIX fee for service and State Administered General Assistance (SAGA) programs will receive their dental services through the State's newly created Dental Health Partnership. Under this new partnership, the Department of Social Services has strongly urged providers to also enroll the parents of HUSKY children in order to provide continuity of care for the entire family unit.

Last year Kool Smiles opened its first two offices in New Britain and New Haven and has since opened two additional offices in Waterbury and Bridgeport. We have made a significant investment in these state of the art dental facilities and have created 67 new positions to Connecticut's employment rolls from Dentist to hygienist and office support personnel.

In line with Connecticut's vision to create a "family-based model" of care and because of several positive factors associated with providing a dental home for children, we have recently changed our practice model to include adult coverage. Providing dental care to our children's parents and guardians, as well as other adults, fits perfectly with Connecticut's goal of providing care for families. This family concept addresses the issues of the difficulties associated with maintaining appointments and follow up visits for our patients and we believe is an integral and "necessary for success" part of the entire dental program.

Unlike providers who will not see, or will only see a small number of underserved patients; Kool Smiles uniquely pursues patients that each state's SCHIP and Medicaid program aims to serve. This unique mission allows Kool Smiles to serve communities in a pioneering way and offer best-in-class service that exceeds professional standards. Kool Smiles is proud of its work; creating smiles on kids' and parents' faces alike. Kool Smiles' premise of care begins with the assumption that good preventative dental care

lasts a lifetime and is more affordable for both the patient and the healthcare system in the long term.

We respectfully submit that **elimination of dental coverage for adults not only will lead to higher and compounded medical expenses in the future, but will negatively impact our ability to serve their children.** Lack of access to dental services causes needless pain and suffering to thousands of children and adults, produces millions of dollars in waste for extensive and costly services in emergency and inpatient hospital settings, negatively impacts the health of children and families, and has a significant effect on our workforce and business community. Studies have shown the long-term cost of eliminating adult dental care is 2.5 times more than the cost of providing care. For all these reasons, we respectfully and strongly request your support in preserving adult dental coverage.

Thank you for your support.