

The Tribal Health Board's/Governing Body's Role in ECC Prevention

Early Childhood Caries (ECC) is any tooth decay in a child under 6 years of age. While some children may only have one tooth that is decayed, and some may have multiple teeth that are decayed (as shown in the picture to the right) it is important to understand that tooth decay in childhood is not normal and can be prevented.



Early childhood caries (tooth decay) is a devastating problem in young children. Not only can it cause pain and loss of teeth, but it also affects self-esteem, speech development, nutrition, and school attendance. Almost 80% of AI/AN children experience dental caries before they reach kindergarten.

The IHS ECC Collaborative was designed to draw attention to this problem, which afflicts more than half of Native American children. This project involves medical staff, dental staff, Community Health Representatives, WIC staff, Head Start staff, and other key stakeholders in your community concerned with the oral health of children. As a Tribal Council or Governing Board, your support of this collaborative is critical to its success in reducing tooth decay.



Things YOU can do

1. **Support** your health clinic in providing services to children in the clinic and in the community at health fairs, schools, and special events.
2. **Learn** about Early Childhood Caries and help spread the prevention messages throughout your community.
3. **Place a priority** on dental treatment of young children... your next generation.
4. **Draft** a tribal resolution to support the Early Childhood Caries Collaborative (*example on back page*).
5. **Encourage** your dental program to formally join the IHS ECC Collaborative Virtual Learning Community, a national program where dental programs share with each other best practices in reducing ECC.

**Together, we CAN
make a difference!**
Go to <http://www.doh.ihs.gov/ecc>



Sample Tribal Resolution

_____ TRIBAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION (#____)

WHEREAS, the _____ Tribe/Nation is a Native American Indian Tribe organized under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, and

WHEREAS, the _____ Tribe is a sovereign Indian Nation, and recognized as such by the United States of America, and

WHEREAS, the _____ Tribal Council is the duly elected governing body of the _____ Tribe, as authorized by _____ of the Constitution and Bylaws adopted by the people of the _____ Tribe/Nation and approved by the Secretary of the Interior, and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Council, as the governing body of a sovereign nation, has the authority and responsibility of providing for the health, education, welfare and safety of the _____ People, and

WHEREAS, dental care has been identified as one of the most critical health problems facing the _____, and dental intervention has been determined to be a primary focus, and

WHEREAS, early childhood caries (ECC) is defined as tooth decay in children under 6 years of age, and is the most prevalent disease of childhood, and

WHEREAS, the 2010 Survey of 0-5 Year-old AI/AN children found that 54% of 1-5 year-olds had experienced ECC, which can result in pain, infection, poor school performance, delayed speech and social development, poor self-esteem, and exorbitant costs to treat it, and

WHEREAS, the Indian Health Service has developed the IHS Early Childhood Caries Collaborative to bring attention and priority to this problem through a multi-disciplinary approach focused on prevention and early intervention,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the _____ Tribal Council hereby recognizes the importance of this Collaborative and fully supports the implementation of the IHS Early Childhood Caries Collaborative throughout the community.

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, as the Secretary-Treasurer of the _____ Tribal Council, certify that the Tribal Council is composed of members of whom were called and polled on this ____ day of _____, and that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the affirmative vote of members for, members against, and members abstaining; pursuant to the authority contained under _____ of our Tribal Constitution and Bylaws approved _____.

APPROVED: _____
Chairman