OMICS Group Conferences
Accelerating Scientific Discovery

International Conference on
Dental & Oral Health

August 19-21, 2013 Embassy Suites Las Vegas, USA

Creating Healthy Teeth One Smile at a Time

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Abstract

Oral health has been acknowledged as an indicator of overall health. Yet, the incidence or oral pathology in children remains a significant issue for public health. To address this problem, a partnership between an academic program, a philanthropic organization and a public health program was established. Over 3 years, approximately 4000 children between the ages of 0 and 5 have been assessed of visual tooth health. Heath education, referrals, and fluoride varnishing were offered during those visits. At the first visit, 18.7 children had seen a dentist and at the second visit, 32.9%*of the children had seen a dentist. At the third visit, 37.4 %* had seen a dentist (*significant at .001). Tooth brushing also increased significantly from the first to the second and second to third visit. This type of interdisciplinary model supports the activity of oral health service in a community setting.