



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Maggie Spain  
Spearca Communications  
405.812.0685, [maggie@spearcadenver.com](mailto:maggie@spearcadenver.com)

Amy Maillet  
Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation  
303.889.8605, [amaillet@ddpco.com](mailto:amaillet@ddpco.com)

**STATEWIDE SURVEY FINDS SIGNIFICANT DECLINE IN JUICE CONSUMPTION  
AMONG COLORADO CHILDREN**

*Fewer parents indicating that they understand that cavities can spread from baby teeth to adult teeth.*

**February 28, 2018 – DENVER** – The results of a new survey by Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation (DDCOF) show that while less Colorado children are consuming juice daily, fewer parents consider baby teeth as important as adult teeth and understand that cavities can spread from baby teeth to adult teeth.

The evaluation, conducted by HealthCare Research, Inc., was given to 605 low-income families in English and Spanish across Colorado. It compared current opinions to the results of a statewide assessment DDCOF commissioned in 2015. The intent was to showcase the reach of the bilingual [Cavities Get Around](#) campaign in preventing the tooth decay, the most common chronic disease of childhood in the United States.

According to the [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment](#), tooth decay affects 31% of kindergartners and 47% of third-graders. Low-income and Hispanic children experience oral health disparities at a higher rate with 58% of Hispanic/Latino third graders having had at least one cavity, compared to 38% of white third graders. Launched in August 2014, the *Cavities Get Around* campaign deployed mass media, grassroots outreach, policy and partnerships to raise awareness and prevent early childhood tooth decay. The 2017 survey results represent the conclusion of the advertising campaign.

According to the survey results:

- The percentage of participants who said their children are drinking juice at least once a day decreased significantly, from 47% in 2015 to 35% in 2017.
- Among parents surveyed who have seen *Cavities Get Around* advertising, their perception of fruit juice's nutritional value has declined 24 points since 2015.
- More parents recognize the benefits of drinking tap water (up 16 points from 2015 to 60% in 2017), although daily consumption of tap water among children remains flat at 60%.



- Several beverages that should be considered “bad” for children’s oral health were more likely to be recognized as such in 2017 (improving from 2015 survey results):
  - Flavored milk (from 58% to 73%).
  - Soda/Pop (from 94% to 97%).
  - Fruit juice (from 47% to 73%).
- There was a decline in participants who consider baby teeth at least as important as adult teeth, from 84% in 2015 to 76% in 2017, and in their understanding that cavities can spread from baby teeth to other teeth, from 71% in 2015 to 59% in 2017.

When the *Cavities Get Around* campaign launched in 2014, it focused on raising awareness of the impacts of juice and other sugary drinks on child oral health – at the time this was new information to many Coloradans. A key message of the campaign was to only serve water to children between meals and at bedtime. By limiting the consumption of sugary drinks like juice, baby teeth are better protected. Extensive target audience research informed campaign messaging and strategy.

“Sugar is one of the main causes of tooth decay in children,” said Allison Cusick, executive director of DDCOF. “Over the years, our *Cavities Get Around* campaign aimed to help parents, caregivers and adults working with children to learn about the benefits of giving kids tap water and reducing the amount of juice they consume to improve oral and overall health.”

Since 2014, many campaigns started sharing information about sugary drinks. The results of the DDCOF survey indicate these combined efforts have been effective. However, there is not a strong connection between the public recognition of sugar in juice to the importance of protecting baby teeth.

The campaign also supported community-based nonprofit grantee efforts including community organizing and policy change. Partners involved in the *Cavities Get Around* campaign include Bright By Three, Children’s Hospital Colorado, Children’s Museum of Denver, Healthier Colorado, Qualistar Colorado, Southeastern Colorado Area Health Education Center and Westwood Unidos. As the *Cavities Get Around* campaign comes to a close, DDCOF will continue to support these partners’ outreach efforts related to educating communities on cavities in early childhood and the importance of baby teeth.

###

**About Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation:**

For more than 20 years, Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation (DDCOF) grants and initiatives have included educational programs intended to reach Colorado communities that have been historically underserved; support of dental health education for health care providers to improve the overall well-being of patients; and opportunities to teach good oral health habits and cavity prevention among pregnant women and children. As a 501(c)(3) organization solely funded by Delta Dental of Colorado, DDCOF works to make oral health a community priority for all Coloradans. To learn more, visit [www.deltadentalcofoundation.org](http://www.deltadentalcofoundation.org).