

# Oral Health Access Santa Cruz County

## 2021 REPORT CARD



### Promoting oral health for our county's most vulnerable populations.

We are eager to share the impact of our Strategic Plan 2017-2020, most notably — 64% of children are going to the dentist. This is a tremendous improvement from our starting point of 36% in 2014. In this report, we celebrate the work done to make huge strides in addressing the oral health needs of children. We are grateful for our community partners whose efforts are truly making an impact.

But, there is more work to be done for patients of all ages. Currently, only 22% of low-income adults and seniors on Medi-Cal are able to go to the dentist. We look forward to continuing this work because everyone deserves a healthy smile.

**Sepideh Taghvaei, DDS**

Chief Dental Officer  
Dientes Community Dental Care

**Zach Friend**

Supervisor  
Santa Cruz County



Oral Health Access  
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY



Co-chairs, Oral Health Access

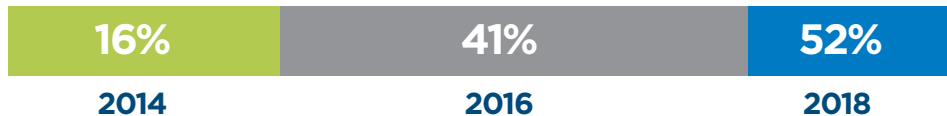
### GOAL 1:

### Promote a First Tooth, First Birthday Campaign to Reach New Parents

Visiting the dentist at an early age helps establish good oral health throughout life.

**238%↑**

Increase in children having their 1st dental visit by their 1st tooth or 1st birthday since 2014



Medi-Cal Dental Utilization Rates for Ages 0-2



### Community partners are echoing oral health messages!

- 6,450 new families received oral health education from First 5 in 2020 alone
- Social media campaign and radio ads in Spanish and English conducted by County Public Health
- Priority given for 'first dental visits' by Dientes and Salud Para la Gente

## GOAL 2:

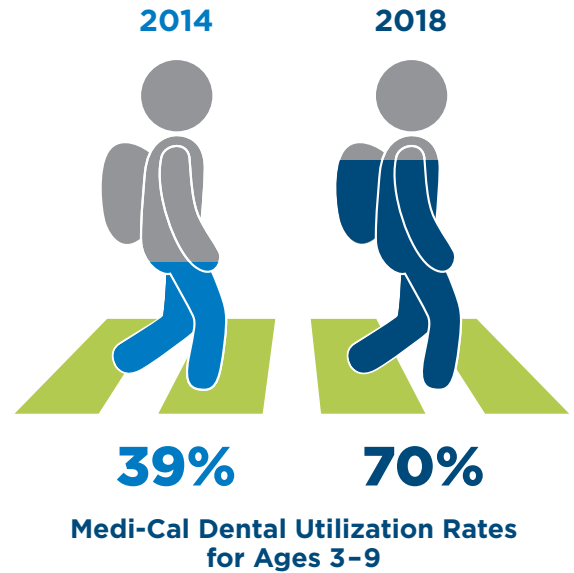
### Encourage Kindergarten Oral Health Screenings

More kindergarten and first graders are going to the dentist!

**79%↑** increase in children with a dental home since 2014

Our schools are championing oral health!

- Sustained focus from Santa Cruz County schools ensures more children have a regular dentist when entering school
- Dientes and Salud are prioritizing these appointments



## GOAL 3:

### Expand Prevention, Treatment and Clinical Capacity

More medical offices are providing cavity-prevention services.

**229%↑**

increase in the use of fluoride varnish in well-child medical visits since 2014

Oral health prevention incentives help!

- In 2020, Central California Alliance for Health included fluoride varnish application as a Care Based Incentive (CBI) in order to increase participation

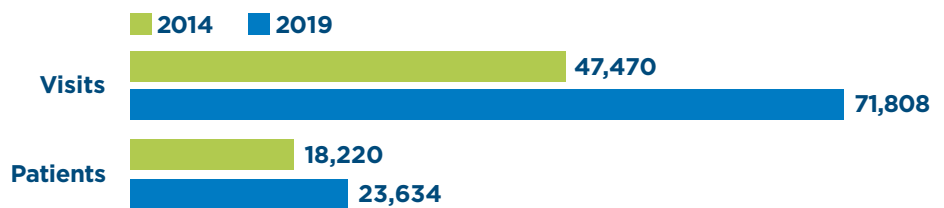
Dientes & Salud — Increasing access to dental care!

**51%↑**

Visits since 2014

**30%↑**

Patients since 2014



Dientes and Salud, All Ages

Investment in staff and clinical space = more access to care!



- Salud Para La Gente hired more mid-level providers to grow appointments by 96 per week since 2018
- Dientes added three dental chairs in their current clinics and will open a new clinic in Live Oak to serve 6,000 additional patients a year by 2022