

1 out of 5 Texans Has Not Seen a Dentist in 5 Years or More

Fewer than two in ten Texans graded themselves an “A” for oral health and only four in ten parents give their children an “A”

New York, NY., September 17, 2018 – Many Texans would agree that healthy teeth and gums are important, however a [Guardian](#) survey shows Texans aren’t backing it up with regular visits to the dentist. In fact, 1 out of 5 Texans admit they haven’t seen a dentist in 5 years or more. 57% have seen a dentist in the last year, with only 39% of those having done so in the last 6 months. The American Dental Association recommends that both adults and children visit a dentist twice a year to maintain good dental health¹.

“The research is there – regular dental visits can help detect serious medical conditions and help avoid dental diseases like periodontal disease and tooth decay,” said Dr. Randi Tillman, Chief Dental Officer, at Guardian. “What’s disconcerting is that Texans – across Austin, Dallas, Houston and San Antonio - are putting off going to the dentist, which can lead to more severe oral health issues in the long run and impact their overall health and well-being.”

The survey results show that Texans who did put off dental visits either lost a tooth, required an extraction or paid a bigger dental bill due to a more expensive procedure. When asked why they put off a procedure, more than half cite cost as the main factor. However, when Texans were asked what causes more financial stress - unexpected dental procedures or paying taxes – 64 percent say paying for an unexpected dental procedure would be more stressful.

Guardian research shows that the regularity of preventive dental care is tied to better oral health. Not surprisingly, fewer than two in ten Texans give themselves an “A” for oral health, with nearly half grading themselves a “C” or below. And even though parents are more likely to give their children a higher rating, the survey shows that parents who maintained better oral health are more likely to rate their children’s oral habits higher. For example, parents who give themselves an A or B for their own oral health are significantly more likely to feel they take their own oral health seriously, thus helping influence their child(ren)’s oral habits versus parents who give their own oral health a C-F (59%: A-B vs. 28% C-F).

These findings underscore the importance of practicing good oral health habits at a young age, which is what the [Guardians of the Smile](#) program, a partnership between Guardian and [Children’s Health Fund \(CHF\)](#), aims to do. The program, a multi-year long partnership, will provide necessary dental resources and academic programming to teach students about proper lifelong oral hygiene habits. Due to the need for improved dental habits in Texas, Guardian and CHF are bringing the program to the state this month and making its first stop in Dallas, accompanied by the Tooth Guardian, a superhero who teaches kids how to care for their teeth in a fun and interactive way.

“A Children’s Health Fund report issued in 2017 called attention to the fact that poor oral hygiene negatively impacts a child’s attendance and school performance,” said Dennis Walto, CEO of Children’s Health Fund. “We all have to do more to ensure that kids, and their parents, get the information they need to make healthy choices.”

For more information about Guardian, please visit www.guardianlife.com.

Methodology

This research is based on interviews with 2,903 consumers in Texas State, balanced on age, gender, income, and DMA conducted in August of 2018. The margin of error is ±0.519% percent with a confidence level of 95 percent.

¹ 2018 Guardian Texas Oral Health Survey



About Guardian

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2018-66304 (9/20)