

Does the stress of being a parent lead to decay in children's teeth?

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A team of scientists from The Ohio State University has examined the stress levels of parents whose young children either had no cavities or so many cavities that the children had receive anesthesia before undergoing dental treatment.

The investigators presented their findings today during the 87th General Session of the International Association for Dental Research.

The team also looked at the parents' education levels and income, and noted if they were single [parents](#). Finally, they measured the parents' [stress](#) levels again after the [children](#) had received dental treatment.

As they expected, they found that low income, having little education, and being a single parent led to increases in parental stress. They also discovered that the more stressed parents are, the more likely their children were to have decay. Last, they found that apparently having one's child's dental decay treated actually could decrease the stress of being a parent.

It now appears that dental professionals need to be ready not only to repair childhood decay, but also to assist families in finding the help they need to decrease the stress of life.

Source: International & American Association for Dental Research

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