



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Date:** March 29, 2019

**Contact:** Tara Kennon, Communications Coordinator, tkennon@co.slo.ca.us, 805-781-4210

**Media Invitation: Virtual Dental Home Demonstration and Open House**  
***Innovative new program brings dental care to children at school***

San Luis Obispo, CA— The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department is pleased to announce the launch of a new effort to bring dental care to more SLO County children: the virtual dental home program.

Through this state-funded program, a dental hygienist and care coordinator visit three local elementary schools to provide cleanings, X-rays, fluoride treatment and sealants. With equipment that easily fits in the trunk of a car, they create a “pop up” dental clinic at each school and send records electronically to a dentist, who can then provide more complex treatment if needed. This allows one dentist to serve more children than otherwise possible, a benefit that’s especially important in places like SLO County with relatively few dentists who accept Medi-Cal Dental benefits. You’re invited to join us for a unique look behind the scenes of this innovative effort:

**What:** Hear from the dental team and see a demonstration of the portable equipment in action.

**When:** Tuesday, April 2, 3:00-4:00 p.m.

**Where:** Grover Beach Elementary, 365 S. 10th Street

**Who:** Hear from Dr. Penny Borenstein, County of San Luis Obispo Health Officer; Barb Morrow, Oral Health Program Manager with the Public Health Department; dental hygienists and care coordinators with the virtual dental home program; and other local health and education leaders.

**Why:** Nationwide, tooth decay is the most prevalent childhood disease, five times more common than asthma. In SLO County, close to 45 percent of children have cavities by the time they reach third grade—and that number increases to nearly 70 percent for children in low-income communities. In 2015-16, only 45 percent of children enrolled in Medi-Cal Dental had a dental visit. This is largely because of difficulty finding dentists who accept Medi-Cal Dental. The virtual dental home program holds promise to address these barriers directly, connecting more children with high-quality dental care. As a result, kids get more regular dental care—meaning fewer complex problems in the long run.

**Interview availability:** Speakers will be available for individual in-person interviews after the demonstration.

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**County of San Luis Obispo Health Agency**

2191 Johnson Avenue | San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 | (P) 805-781-5500 | (F) 805-781-5543

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