



*Tanggapan ng Kalihim  
Office of the Secretary*

August 11, 1999

**DECS MEMORANDUM**  
No 337, s 1999

**SIRENGTHENING PREVENTIVE ORAL HEALTH CARE IN SCHOOLS**

**To Underscretaries  
Assistant Secretaries  
Bureau/Service/Center Directors  
Regional Directors  
School Superintendents  
All Other Concerned**

1 Oral health diseases particularly dental caries remain unabated among public school children despite intensive efforts provided by dentists in the schools. Results of the National Oral Survey Among Public Elementary School Children conducted in SY 1997-1998 showed that 25% of the first (6 year) molars of the children were already decayed and nine (9%) percent had gingivitis. These findings are significant because the first molars are the key to the development of good dentition by guiding the eruption of the succeeding permanent teeth into proper alignment. It is deemed necessary therefore that special attention be given to the care of the first molars and to prevent tooth decay that may result to early loss of teeth, malocclusion or just a simple toothache that may cause the child to be absent in class.

2 In view of the foregoing findings, regional directors are enjoined to instruct all school dentists to give utmost priority to the dental health examination of pre school and Grade I pupils and strengthen/intensify the implementation of the following activities in schools:

- 1) care of the first (six year) molars among the grade I pupils
- 2) Conduct of the 0-2% Sodium Fluoride mouthrinsing activities involving all Gr. I-VI pupils in all schools
- 3) regular toothbrushing during recess time
- 4) use of the Atraumatic Restorative treatment (ART) glass ionomer filling material both as a restorative and pits and fissure sealant for molars
- 5) dental health information/education
- 6) monitoring of the oral health education Bright Smiles Bright Futures program
- 7) Advocate the provision by parents of a toothbrush and toothpaste to each child to ensure the development of a regular and proper toothbrushing habit among the children

3 School administrators health and nutrition supervisors/personnel and teachers are enjoined to support the program

4 The accomplishments shall be included in the quarterly report submitted to the Health and Nutrition Center DECS Pasig City

5 Immediate dissemination of this Memorandum to all concerned is desired

*Andrew Gonzalez*  
ANDREW GONZALEZ, FSC  
Secretary



**Reference**

DECS Memorandum No 240, s. 1998

Allotment 1—(D O 50 97)

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index  
under the following subjects

HEALTH EDUCATION  
PROJECTS  
PUPILS