

Healthy People 2010: Developing and Implementing Strategies to Eliminate Oral Health Disparities Among Children

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Eliminating health disparities and improving quality of life are the two overarching goals of Healthy People 2010. Oral health objectives for 2010 illustrate disparities in oral health status and in access to oral health care for children. Examples include a 12-fold difference by level of education or income among 6-8-year-old children in untreated decay; an almost 2-fold difference by race/ethnicity among 2-4-year-old who have ever experienced dental decay; and a 2-3 fold difference by income in past-year preventive dental visits.

Interdisciplinary, collaborative, public and private approaches as well as public-private partnerships are needed to develop strategies to meet the targets of all Healthy People 2010 objectives. By addressing those objectives related to oral health status, interventions and infrastructure (capacity-building), elimination of oral health disparities can be achieved.