



City and County of San Francisco
Mark Farrell
Mayor

San Francisco Department of Public Health

Barbara A. Garcia, MPA
Director of Health

MEDIA ADVISORY

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If you are able to attend, please RSVP with Kara Lugtu at kara.lugtu@ucsf.edu

City Leaders Come Together to Protect the Oral Health of SF Children

Dental cavities continue to disproportionately affect children of color in SF

As part of a city-wide effort to underscore and inform the community about the importance of children's oral health, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) and the University of California, San Francisco will be co-hosting the "**4th Annual San Francisco Children's Oral Health Leadership Forum**". Other co-hosts include: SF Dental Transformation Initiative – Local Dental Pilot project, SF Health Network, Our Children Our Families, and SF Unified School District (SFUSD). This forum is an opportunity for SF community leaders to learn about the successes and opportunities for improving dental care for overall health and a healthier SF.

WHAT: CavityFree SF (formerly San Francisco Children's Oral Health (SFCOH) Collaborative) is convening the "4th Annual SF Children's Oral Health Leadership Forum"

WHEN: Tuesday, April 3rd, 2018, 2:00 - 4:30pm

WHERE: St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Francis Hall
1111 Gough Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

SPEAKERS: Edward Chow, MD, *President, SF Health Commission*
Hydra Mendoza, *Deputy Chief of Staff of Education and Equity, Office of the Mayor; President, SFUSD Board of Education*

WHY: In San Francisco, the current dental decay disparity between children of color (Asian, Latino, and African American) and Caucasian children is staggering - over 35-44 percent of our children of color by the age of 5 have dental decay, whereas their Caucasian counterparts experience this childhood disease at



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15 percent. Dental decay is an under-recognized, yet serious health problem, having negative consequences across a child's life time. If left untreated, cavities can lead to unnecessary pain, inability to eat or speak properly, extensive and costly treatment, school absence, future oral health problems in adulthood, and overall diminished health and well-being. Access to dental care is a significant concern and is particularly challenging in high cost areas such as San Francisco.

HOW: CavityFree SF's annual forum brings together community health leaders and advocates committed to improving the health and wellness of all San Franciscans. During the forum, leaders from across the city will engage and participate in developing policies and cross-sector programmatic solutions for making the city cavity-free. [SFCOH's Strategic Plan 2014-2017](#) has been revised to prioritize the most effective, evidence-based actions each group can take to make the most impact. Strategies such as bringing oral health preventive services into medical visits, early dental referrals by age one, and community health education and promotion are all essential to protecting the oral health of SF children and families. Target groups are children under 10, pregnant women, low-income communities of color, recent immigrants and other populations most at-risk.

The newly revised Strategic Plan 2014-2020 will be available [here](#) next week.

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About San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH)

The mission of the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) is to protect and promote the health of all San Franciscans. SFDPH strives to achieve its mission through the work of two main divisions – the San Francisco Health Network and the Population Health Division. The San Francisco Health Network is a community of top-rated clinics, hospitals and programs that serves more than 100,000 people annually at sites such as Castro Mission, Chinatown, and Southeast health centers, Zuckerberg San Francisco General and Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center. With a broad community focus, the goal of the Population Health Division is to ensure that San Franciscans have optimal health and wellness at every stage of life. To achieve this, the Division is comprised of branches dedicated to core public health services, such as health protection and promotion, disease and injury prevention, disaster preparedness and response, and environmental health services.

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