

# Release for School Absences

---

## A Message to Parents and School Administrators Regarding School Absence for Dental Appointments

Tooth decay in children can be painful, just as it is in adults. Although largely preventable with proper home care and regular dental visits, untreated tooth decay diminishes a child's ability to eat, sleep, and function well at home or at school. The unesthetic nature of tooth decay and dental malocclusion also may compromise the child's self-esteem and social development. Prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of oral health conditions require professional care.

The **American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry** recognizes the importance of regular school attendance and the effect of chronic absence on academic performance. We encourage our members to work with parents and educators to minimize school absence whenever possible. It is not always possible or appropriate to provide all the care children need during nonschool hours. **School policies that prevent legitimate school absence for the purpose of dental visits may have a negative impact on the health and well being of children.**

The **American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry** urges parents, school administrators, and member dentists to work together to ensure that children receive needed health care while minimizing school absences. The **American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry** encourages parents to return their children to school for the remainder of the day after their dental visit when possible. In the case of an appointment later in the day, a child should attend school and be excused prior to his/her dental appointment.

### School Attendance Release

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ had an appointment in this office on \_\_\_\_\_  
from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ for necessary oral health care.