



**PRESS RELEASE
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**TEXAS DENTAL ASSOCIATION (TDA) UNVEILS 2008 REPORT ON
IMPROVING ORAL HEALTH CARE IN TEXAS
*Report Makes Five Recommendations***

Austin, Texas (Dec. 9, 2008) – Today the Texas Dental Association (TDA) unveiled its first-ever report on the status of oral health care in Texas, *“Building Better Oral Health: A Dental Home for all Texans,”* commissioned by the TDA with grant funding from the American Dental Association (ADA).

The report examines the barriers to oral health, the medical, economic, and social consequences of untreated oral disease, as well as the state of the oral health care delivery system in Texas, the oral health status of Texas compared to the rest of the nation, and what populations are in the greatest need for oral health care services.

The report was modeled after the groundbreaking 2000 U.S. Surgeon General study, *Oral Health in America*. To develop the report, the TDA assembled a team of five nationally recognized dentists from both academia and private practice (known as the Editorial Review Board): **Patricia L. Blanton, D.D.S., M.S., Ph.D., Kevin Donly, D.D.S, M.S., Arthur Jeske, D.M.D., Ph.D., Eric S. Solomon, D.D.S., M.A. and Karen B. Troendle, D.D.S., M.P.H.** The Editorial Review Board was asked to identify the State’s most pressing issues, needs, and challenges associated with improving the oral health of all Texans, with a special focus on the State’s most vulnerable.

“We hope this report will spur a new dialogue about the state of oral health in Texas and what we can do as a state to help improve the oral health of all Texans,” said Dr. Hilton Israelson, President of the Texas Dental Association.

The ERB developed five key policy recommendations to help build better oral health for all Texans:

- 1) Identify a “dental home” for every Texan
- 2) Strengthen the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Oral Health Program (OHP)
- 3) Create new programs to encourage general dentists and specialists to practice in underserved areas and to treat underserved populations
- 4) Develop a comprehensive oral health public awareness and education campaign
- 5) Expand access to oral health services for older Texans

To download a full copy of the report and learn more, visit www.buildingbetteroralhealth.org

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About the Texas Dental Association:

The Texas Dental Association (TDA), chartered in 1871, is the third largest state dental association in the United States. Currently, the Association has more than 7,700 members and is comprised of 26 component dental societies grouped into four divisions across the state of Texas. The TDA is part of a tri-partite affiliation with the American Dental Association as its national representative and its component societies at the local level. For more information about the TDA, visit the association's Web site at www.tda.org.

About the American Dental Association:

The American Dental Association (ADA) is the nation's largest dental association, representing more than 155,000 dentist members. The premier source of oral health information, the ADA has advocated for the public's health and promoted the art and science of dentistry since 1859. The ADA's state-of-the-art research facilities develop and test dental products and materials that have advanced the practice of dentistry and made the patient experience more positive. The ADA Seal of Acceptance long has been a valuable and respected guide to consumer and professional products. For more information about the ADA, visit the association's Web site at www.ada.org.