

Fact Sheet: House Bill 687 Restrictions on School-Based Dentistry

All Louisiana children deserve first-class dental care in a permanent office – a dental home.

- At the LDA's 2009 Annual Session, dentist members from across Louisiana overwhelmingly endorsed a policy to give all Louisiana children comprehensive, long-term care in dental homes – which dictates permanent, fixed offices instead of mobile clinics.
- The dental home is unmistakably the appropriate setting in which to provide comprehensive treatment for all patients, a view the LDA shares with the American Dental Association, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry and the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- The profession is working to ensure that all Medicaid-eligible children see reputable dentists in their offices at least once a year.
- A fixed, permanent dental office model has been tested, it's proven, it is well-regulated by our profession and the State, and the public is best served by it.

The LDA's Medicaid Access-to-Care Task Force is in the second phase of its comprehensive program to examine and treat all Medicaid-eligible children by the end of the next school year.

- For 10 years, Louisiana's dentists have worked to create greater access to quality dental care for the state's children, regardless of financial means.
- This new phase of public education will address the needs of all public school children, along with their parents and guardians.
- The LDA is in the process of working with state and local officials, including individual school districts, to provide parents of Medicaid-eligible children with updated lists of Medicaid providers for dental care.
- More than 1,100 reputable dentists, a record number that continues to grow, now treat Medicaid-eligible children in their offices where children and their parents can develop a collaborative dentist-patient relationship in a fixed, permanent office setting.
- Louisiana is on the right track advocating long-term dental care by dentists in their offices.

Mobile, in-school, for-profit clinics are a threat to the dental home concept endorsed by the Louisiana and American Dental Associations, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

- Many reputable dentists, especially pediatric specialists, believe that companies are offering a "quick fix" solution by attempting to create in-school dental treatment programs, thereby eliminating a parent's right to oversee their child's dental care, almost inevitably resulting in substandard care for the children who need help the most.
- Many dentists assert that these mobile practices eliminate parents' rights and informed consent and threaten the decade long effort of the dental profession to provide comprehensive oral health care throughout the state.
- In many cases exams and treatments, including invasive treatments, have been administered in gymnasiums and other school facilities that lacked privacy, proper equipment and presented substantial impediments to proper infection control.
- In some cases, school systems and administrators were unaware that individual schools were undertaking these in-school dental relationships, which obviously could have legal and insurance liability impacts on the entire school district.