



Letter to Editor

## Lift the lip: Screening tool for health care professionals

Faizal C. Peedikayil

Department of Pediatric and Preventive Dentistry, Kannur Dental College, Kannur, Kerala, India.

**\*Corresponding author:**

Faizal C. Peedikayil,  
Department of Pediatric and  
Preventive Dentistry, Kannur  
Dental College, Kannur, Kerala,  
India.

[drfaizalcp@gmail.com](mailto:drfaizalcp@gmail.com)

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Sir,

Early childhood caries continues to be a highly prevalent global disease of public health importance in children under the age of 6 years.<sup>[1]</sup> Various guidelines states child should visit a dentist within 6 months of eruption of the first primary tooth and no later than 12 months of age.<sup>[2]</sup> But the compliance of this dictum is poor even in developed countries like UK. The Royal College of Surgeons of England press release media release shows that 80% of 1–2-year-olds and 60% of children aged one to four did not visit an NHS dentist in 2016–17.<sup>[3]</sup> In India, common age for the first dental visit was 4–6 years.<sup>[4]</sup>

A timely first visit to the dental office creates oral health awareness among parents and caregivers. It can have long-term benefits for the child and should be an integral part of pediatric health care. Pediatricians and other healthcare professionals examine infants several times from birth to adulthood.<sup>[5]</sup> Therefore “Lift the Lip” can be an oral health screening tool used to detect the early signs of dental diseases.<sup>[6]</sup> By performing “Lift the Lip” Program for all the patients, any health care professionals can identify white lines or spots on the tooth, brown spots at the gumline, broken teeth, cavities, and halitosis. If this simple quick screening is done on a consistent basis, pediatricians can identify the dental conditions and inform the parents to treat it before it becomes serious. The morbidity associated with ECC can be reduced to large extend. Therefore, it is imperative that “Lift the lip” diagnostic tool has to be emphasized to the healthcare professionals through their specialist organizations and also by conducting continuing education programs.

### Declaration of patient consent

Patient's consent not required as there are no patients in this study.

### Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

### Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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