



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Starting this fall, all kindergarten students in your child's class will receive a new education curriculum and participate in some fun classroom activities!

Your child's school has agreed to take part in a research study called CATCH Healthy Smiles conducted by the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health to evaluate the effectiveness of the CATCH Healthy Smiles school-based oral health program on reducing risk of tooth decay among children in starting in Kindergarten through grade 2. Dental caries is the **most common** childhood disease. In Texas, 68% of children aged 6-8 have untreated dental caries (12% higher than the national average). Children with dental health issues are nearly three times more likely to miss school. The good news is, tooth decay is preventable with education and healthy dental hygiene habits starting with their first baby tooth.

The way the study works is that your child's school will be randomly assigned to either the intervention group or the comparison group. The intervention group will receive the CATCH Healthy Smiles program, and the comparison group will receive Ray and the Sunbeatables®, a proven sun-safety program for children.

CATCH Healthy Smiles is designed to improve students' oral health by teaching and encouraging proper tooth brushing and flossing, eating a nutritious diet, and promoting regular visits to a dentist. The program has interactive classroom and PE lessons, as well as a parent resource page and home-connection activities.

Ray and the Sunbeatables® is an evidence-based sun safety curriculum. It educates children, parents and teachers about sun protection and promotes sun safety behaviors in an effort to reduce children's lifetime risk of developing skin cancer.

The CATCH Healthy Smiles research study will start soon at your child's school in the kindergarten classroom in the current school year. You and your kindergarten child are also invited to participate in the evaluation part of this research study (to see if it works). All students in your child's class will receive the curriculum and participate in the classroom activities, but only the children whose parents/legal guardians consented to be part of this research project will be measured (dental assessment etc.). You can read more about the research study and sign up to participate on the parent consent form attached.

We hope that you and your family will find the program helpful. Please contact smiles@uth.tmc.edu if you have any questions about the program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shreela".

Shreela. V. Sharma, PhD, RD, LD
Principal Investigator, CATCH Healthy Smiles