



Pediatric Dental Initiative

Great smiles. Great futures.  
Together, we make kids smile.™

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## PDI Treats First Patient with Help from Friends

Almost one year after receiving its non-profit status, PDI's first patient successfully received dental surgery under anesthesia at Petaluma Valley Hospital. Sandra Echavarria, a PDI Case Manager, worked with Petaluma Valley Hospital, Dr. Elizabeth Van Tassell, who performed the surgery, and her staff, Gloria Seymour, to secure a date for surgery and comfort the Lemus' throughout the referral and surgical process. The Lemus' were connected with PDI through Marie Ibanez at Kids' Net, a program of Community Action Partnership Sonoma County (CAPS). Maria Lemus, age 1½, had her 2 front teeth removed, one tooth capped and several cavities filled. "I was nervous in the morning," said Maria's father Francisco Lemus. "I am happy now," he said after learning that the surgery was a success. PDI is thankful to everyone who helped make this day possible.



Dr. Van Tassell meets Maria before Surgery



The Lemus family with Sandra in the Pre-Op

**About PDI.** PDI is a non-profit, community-based organization founded by a group of child health advocates to address the unmet oral health needs of children from low-income backgrounds who need anesthesia for dental treatment. PDI's mission is to open a dental surgery center dedicated to serving the oral surgery needs of children in Northern California, regardless of a patient's insurance status or ability to pay. Through dental education and outreach efforts, working with parents and health care providers, PDI hopes to eliminate the pain, suffering and distractions that living with Baby Bottle tooth decay causes. Treatment and education helps build the confidence children need to excel in school and on the playground. For more information about PDI, please visit: [www.pedidental.org](http://www.pedidental.org).

**About Baby Bottle Tooth Decay.** Baby Bottle Tooth Decay (Early Childhood Caries – ECC) is a major health issue in America today, affecting an estimated 28% of children in California alone, most of whom are children from low-income families with little or no dental insurance. The prevalence of junk food, soda, and juice in children's diets is a major cause of tooth decay, as is poor dental hygiene. Reducing sugar intake, and brushing and flossing daily are important first steps toward healthy teeth. Please contact a dentist for advice.

brush. floss. thrive.™

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