

# Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Healthy Kids Dental Newsletter

## September 15 – October 15 is National Hispanic Heritage month

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month with Dr. Bertha Alarcon.



Dr. Bertha Alarcon is a member of the Hispanic Dental Association and works as the College Coordinator for diversity and inclusion activities at Western University’s College of Dental Medicine. She shared insights as a Hispanic woman in dentistry and talked about the importance of having role models and mentorship.

Alarcon was born in Guadalajara, Mexico. She became interested in dental care at a young age. “Growing up, it was hard to find dentists who looked and sounded like me. All individuals deserve to have access to the oral health care they need. But accessing care goes beyond having a dental office down the street from your house,” she says. Despite facing barriers after moving to the United States, she didn’t give up. She has spent 30 years helping Hispanic communities.

Alarcon explains, “Accessibility means addressing a lack of transportation, the inability to take time off work, language and cultural barriers and cost of care. It also means reviving dental education by bringing social sciences into the curriculum. So, students are equipped with knowledge of structural obstacles in society and cultural differences.” Today, she mentors students and helps create spaces for people from different backgrounds in dental schools. Her work as a mentor has encouraged many students to become dentists. This shows the importance of having role models in the field.

At Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, we’re proud to support Alarcon’s mission and wish her much success in the future.

## What you should know about teledentistry

Teledentistry uses technology to connect patients with dental providers from a distance. You can use it to connect with your dentist using your cell phone or tablet, says the American Dental Association. Many people who have used teledentistry said they were happy with the experience. In a survey, [86% of patients said they would use teledentistry again](#).

Teledentistry also makes it easier to get care if you live far from a dental office, don’t have a way to get to the dentist or have mobility issues. Teledentistry makes it easier to take care of your teeth because you can talk to your dentist from anywhere and get help when you need it. To learn more visit [bit.ly/BCBSM-HKD-teledentistry](http://bit.ly/BCBSM-HKD-teledentistry) or call 1-866-432-1395.



## Prevent cavities in early childhood

Did you know tooth decay can be caused by drinking milk or juice from a bottle or sippy cup? And children who drink from a bottle or sippy cup while laying on their back are more prone to ear infections.

Here is what you can do to prevent tooth decay:

- Don’t put your baby to bed with a bottle of milk or juice in their mouth.
- If you use a bottle as a pacifier, make sure you only add water.
- Teach your children to drink from a cup by the time they are 12 months old.
- If your baby doesn’t have teeth, gently wipe his or her gums with a clean, damp, soft washcloth or gauze after each feeding.

## Finding a dental home for your child

What is a dental home? A dental home is where you take your child to see the dentist every six months. The dentist will take care of your child’s teeth by giving the care they need and by teaching you and your child about good habits for teeth and gums. Having a dental home will help make sure your child stays on track for routine oral care and can help prevent cavities. You can find or change your child’s dental home by calling 1-800-936-0935 (TTY: 711).

What if your child has a dental emergency? This may be any time your child has severe pain or damage to the teeth or to the mouth. Your child has the same benefits for both emergency and routine care. You can call your Medicaid health plan or your child’s dentist for help to find care in an emergency. You don’t have to contact your Medicaid health plan or your child’s dentist for approval.



## Get a ride to your Healthy Kids Dental appointments at no cost

Please note that you will need to contact your Medicaid health plan if you want to schedule a ride to your dental appointment. Members enrolled in a Medicaid health plan can contact their plan for transportation services. A helpful list is included on the right.

If you’re not in a Medicaid health plan and are a resident of Wayne, Oakland or Macomb county call MovivCare at 1-866-569-1902. If you aren’t in a Medicaid health plan and don’t live in Wayne, Oakland or Macomb county, contact [your local Michigan Department of Health and Human Services](#).



### Medicaid Health Plan transportation contacts

**Aetna Better Health of MI:** 1-844-610-7437  
**Blue Cross Complete of MI:** 1-888-803-4947  
**HAP CareSource:** 1-833-230-2053  
**McLaren Health Plan:** 1-855-251-7100  
**Meridian Health Plan of MI:** 1-888-437-0606  
**Molina Healthcare of MI:** 1-888-898-7969  
**Priority Health Choice:** 1-888-975-8102  
**UnitedHealthcare Community Plan:** 1-877-892-3995  
**Upper Peninsula Health Plan:** 1-800-835-2556

## Michigan’s Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program benefits



Finding and treating dental problems can help children do well in school. That’s why the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services created the Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program. Kindergarteners in Michigan are eligible to receive a no cost dental screening provided by local health departments. The program is available in most Michigan counties in the 2025-2026 school year. To learn more about the program, please visit the [Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program](#).

You can also contact the local health department for help finding a dental home and community dental resources. The Michigan Oral Health Directory lists dental safety net resources by county.

## Get a \$50 Amazon gift card for taking your child to the dentist

It’s important that your children see a dental provider to prevent cavities, gum disease and other dental problems in children. Blue Cross Healthy Kids Dental program offers an opportunity to receive an Amazon gift card after your child’s preventive checkup by completing a quick survey at: [https://cxinsight.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_OJL6dKVC5TfBPw](https://cxinsight.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_OJL6dKVC5TfBPw)

Some restrictions apply. Eligible members must be enrolled in the Healthy Kids Dental program with Blue Cross. Limited to one gift card per member per year. The program doesn’t allow the purchase of alcohol, tobacco and firearms, and a preventive dental visit must be completed.

**You can also scan the QR code using your smartphone**



## We speak your language

You have the right to receive culturally competent care. If you, or someone you are helping needs assistance, you have the right to get help and information in your language at no cost. You can also get help finding a dentist that speaks your language. To talk to an interpreter, call the Customer Service number on the back of your Blue Cross member ID card.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan is a nonprofit corporation and independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

## Report fraud, waste and abuse

**Report fraud, waste and abuse in the following ways. You can remain anonymous:**

- Call:

Fraud hotline: 1-800-237-9139

Anonymous hotline: 1-866-654-3433
- Mail:

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

P.O. Box 491

Milwaukee, WI 53201-0491

Fax: 262-241-7366

**Fraud, waste and abuse can also be reported directly to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services using the following methods:**

- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Office of Inspector General

P.O. Box 30062

Lansing, MI 48909
- 1-855-MIFRAUD (643-7283)

[michigan.gov/fraud](http://michigan.gov/fraud)

## Contact us

- 1-800-936-0935: TTY users, call 711
- Helpful resources available on the website:

[bcbasm.com/healthykids](http://bcbasm.com/healthykids)



This notice is available at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network's website: <https://www.bcbsm.com/important-information/policies-practices/nondiscrimination-notice/>