

## **The Power of a Bright Smile: Children's Healthy Smiles through Community Health (1 Hour)**

The most vulnerable in our society – children of low socioeconomic status – are at greatest risk for developing oral disease. Twenty-five percent of poor children have not seen a dentist before entering kindergarten. Dental caries is the most chronic childhood disease – five times more common than asthma. Oral health is a critical key to overall health and wellness. Early health promotion during childhood improves lifetime knowledge, behaviors and attitudes.

Dental hygienists play an integral role in educating the public about oral health. There are many high quality resources available, including Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures® – a global program to improve the oral health of children.

This program includes a multicultural educational curriculum developed by global experts. Many oral health problems are preventable, and we can make a difference.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Describe the prevalence of oral disease in children as it relates to socioeconomic status
- Discuss the importance of community and/or school based oral health education for children
- Describe the global reach and list components of the Colgate Bright Smiles and Bright Futures® program
- List the four goals of the Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures® educational curriculum



**YOUR PARTNER IN ORAL HEALTH**