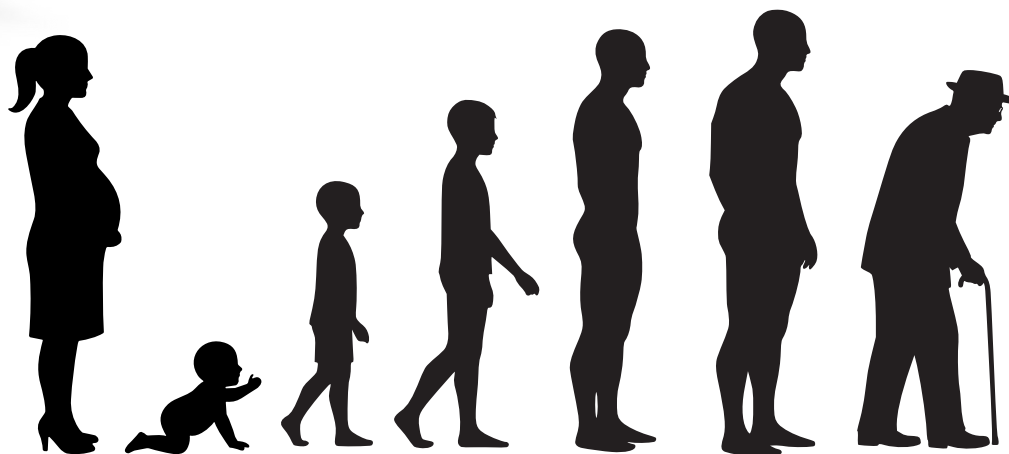




10.23804/ejpd.2025.S01

editorial

Effective Prevention & Lifelong health



Authors

Luigi Paglia
Editor EJPD

Sara Colombo
Deputy Editor - EJPD

Gianni Gallusi
President of the
Italian Society of
Paediatric Dentistry
(SIOI)

Ageing well begins in youth: this is the rationale underpinning the life-course approach that we aim to promote with this special issue of the European Journal of Paediatric Dentistry, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of its foundation. Oral health in adulthood and old age depends not only on genetics, but also on the biological and functional capital established in the early years of life. It is well recognised that the first 1,000 days – from pregnancy through to early childhood – constitute a critical window in which essential biological reserves for the future are formed.

In the dental field, the value of early prevention is self-evident. Appropriate use of fluoride, parental and child education on correct oral hygiene practices, early detection of conditions such as molar–incisor hypomineralisation, implementation of pit and fissure sealing programmes, and dietary management aimed at reducing sugar intake are all interventions that demonstrate long-term benefits.

These measures not only improve the prognosis of future treatments, but also reduce susceptibility to oral diseases in adulthood as well as systemic disorders. Dental caries, the most prevalent chronic disease worldwide, continues to increase in both primary and permanent dentition. Its early occurrence is not merely a dental problem, but also an indicator of exposure to unhealthy lifestyles and to risk factors common to other major conditions, such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. This highlights

oral prevention as a cornerstone of broader non-communicable disease prevention strategies, in line with WHO recommendations.

Examples from daily practice clearly show that paediatric dental prevention is not a cost, but a lifelong investment: every early intervention generates benefits that persist for decades. The challenge in the coming years will be to increasingly integrate oral prevention into maternal and child health programmes, schools, and public health policies, building concrete bridges with paediatrics, nutrition, and other health disciplines, extending through to geriatrics.

On the occasion of this anniversary, this special issue seeks to reaffirm a key message: paediatric dental prevention is fundamental to securing oral health and general well-being across the life-course, from childhood to old age. This statement is not a rhetorical claim, but a commitment firmly grounded in scientific evidence.