

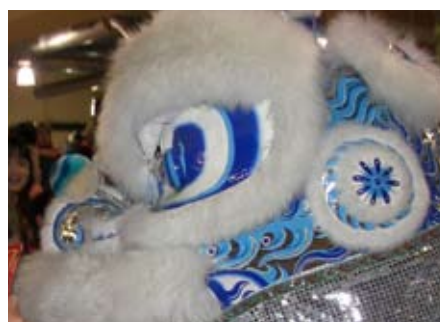


Families with Children from China

HAPPY YEAR OF THE PIG!

Austin, Texas

Spring 2007



Message from the President *Tyla Gilchrist*

Happy New Year! I am honored to be serving this year as President of the FCC Austin Chapter. When my family relocated to Austin from Atlanta, Georgia in January of 2005 we knew no one in Austin. We contacted FCC Austin prior to our move and were fortunate to communicate with several families involved in the Austin FCC Chapter prior to our move. Having left all our family and friends back in Georgia, it was

comforting to have such an amazing community welcome us to our new home in Austin.

My husband, Harold, and I have a 15 year old son, Ben, and adopted our daughter, Lilli, from China in 2004. We returned to China once more in August 2006 to bring home our sweet Audrey. Our family is now complete, but we still have a special place in our hearts for those children

awaiting families in China. We started a group for FCC "Waiting Families" in the spring of 2005 and I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the expectant parents. I encourage all FCC families to attend a gathering now and then to encourage these families through the long wait. It warms my heart to know each month that their child is a little bit closer, and the child's wait is

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a little bit shorter. If you would like to attend a gathering, please feel free to contact me at tylag@austin.rr.com

I am excited about our new Board. Holly Brooke will be serving as VP Membership (and President-elect). Holly served on the Board last year as Secretary. She lives in Cedar Park with her husband Richard and their three beautiful children from China, Riley, Quinn, and Pierce.

Gail Boston will continue to serve as VP Social Events. Gail did an outstanding job last year and I look forward to another year of wonderful events under Gail's direction. Gail lives in Austin with her husband, Erich Rose, and their daughter Emelia.

Cheryl Bonfils-Rasmussen will join the Board this year as Co-VP Social Events. Cheryl will be assisting with planning FCC events as well as organizing the Social Committee Volunteers. Please consider volunteering some time this year to help out with events.

Cheryl lives in Cedar Park with her husband Jann and their daughter Mei Li. Her family will be traveling to China in a few weeks to bring home their new daughter and sister Ying!

Dianne Harwood will join the Board this year as VP Culture and Outreach. Dianne will keep the membership informed of cultural events and resources available in the Austin area. Dianne and her husband John have one

daughter, Allie, and are now DTC for their second child!

Pam Burkhart will continue to serve on the Board as Treasurer. Pam and her husband Tom live in Blanco, TX. They have two daughters, Anna and Maya. I am thrilled to have Pam continuing to serve this year.

Robin Davis will be joining the Board this year as Secretary. Robin and her husband Martin live in Austin with their two sons, Max and Ian, and their daughter Abby.

I would also like to say THANK YOU to last year's President Linda Nenno Breining. Linda did an outstanding job. I learned a great deal from her. Thank you, Linda, for your leadership!



PANDA SISTERS GOT INTO THE SPIRIT OF CHINESE NEW YEAR



A UT Student Organization that Cares



abandoned children regardless of gender or ability.

The University of Texas chapter of this organization works at an international and local level to help this cause. At an international level, the UT chapter fundraises for emergency surgeries, orphanage renovation, and international adoption. They also send students to China to volunteer at the China Care orphanages. Teresa Lo, past president of the UT chapter, traveled to Beijing last summer and was amazed at the difference China Care achieved. "The China Care orphanages were well-kept and the staff was compassionate about the children. What a difference from the other orphanages in the area!"

One way that the UT chapter fundraises is through their annual benefit dinner, which will be held on April the 14th at 8PM in the Texas Union Ballroom. Last year, \$13,000 was raised which went to a cleft palate surgery for a little girl, a heart surgery for an infant boy, and financial aid for adoptions. Their goal this year is to sponsor an education foster home in Beijing which will provide 4 to 5 disabled children a special education, not commonly seen in China, and a nurturing

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The China Care Foundation, a national non-profit organization, offers hope to children who have been affected by the Chinese one child per family rule. Because the child supports the family in China, many parents desire healthy sons who can provide the most financial income. As a result, girls and handicapped children are given up by their parents to make room for a boy. However, the orphanages they are put in are often understaffed, overcrowded, and an overall breeding ground for disease. China Care alleviates this problem by providing immeasurably better housing, medical relief, education, and, most importantly, a loving family for

family. Tickets to the banquet for adults are \$55 for one ticket or \$100 for a pair and features a catered dinner, distinguished guest speaker Dr. Rowena Fong, Chinese cultural performances such as the April Rain Dance, and raffle prizes.

During the school year, the UT chapter holds a bimonthly playgroup at the Asian American Cultural Center on 11713 Jollyville Rd in North Austin. These playgroups provide a place for parents who have adopted Chinese children to create social net-



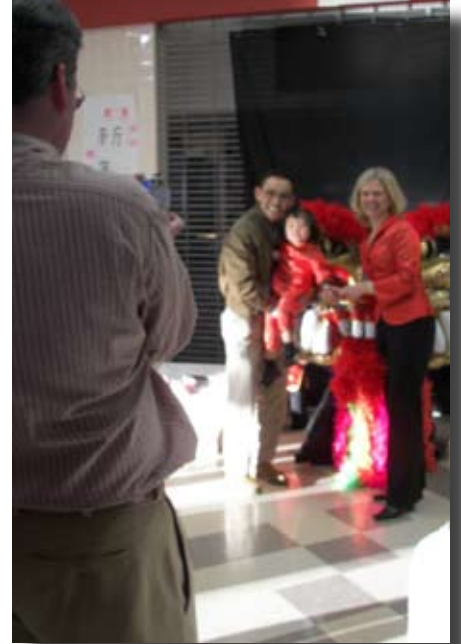
works, while UT students, who organize these playgroups, teach the families about the Chinese culture. Children who attend typically range from age two to ten and are divided into two age groups for different activities. The goal is to help give the children a sense of cultural identity, while having a little fun. The students also hold several Parents' Night Out daycares throughout the year where parents can have

a free night, while the kids take part in an informal playgroup.

In addition to these playgroups, the UT chapter also initiated a Big Brother/Big Sister Mentor program so that the children can interact more regularly with one of the members. Many of the parents are amazed at how much time these students are willing to sacrifice simply to spend some time with these kids. But students claim that the organization's cause and the visible difference they create motivate them to help out as much as possible.

China Care does a great service to our community and addresses some otherwise ignored problems in today's world. These children otherwise destined to live in absolute squalor actually receive a second chance. For more information about this group, visit their website at utexaschinacare.org which includes a Paypal donation option or email them at texaschinacare@gmail.com to order tickets for their benefit banquet.







EARLY DENTAL HEALTH

By David Mah, DDS

I was asked to provide a few comments about early dental health in children with particular emphasis on issues that our adopted children may experience after returning home. Three and a half years ago, my family was born when Jessica and I were united in Changsha, Hunan, China. She was 13 months old and a little more than 8 kg in weight. One of the last things I was worried about then was the condition of her teeth, of which she had eight. The more pressing matters to deal with at the time were how she would bond with me, concerns

about sleep especially night terrors, eating habits, motor and psychological growth....

The bottom and top front incisor teeth are the first ones to erupt at about age 6 months. The sequence continues on until at 2.5 years of age when all the baby teeth would be present. There are 10 upper and 10 lower teeth when eruption is complete in a child's mouth. Much of the quality of the enamel of the early teeth is determined by prenatal nutrition. The baby incisors can be discolored or weakened by medications or excess minerals taken when the fetus is developing or if there is lack of calcium during the teeth-forming period. For the most part, the strength of the teeth is out of our control when the teeth are developing, but once they have erupted, there are a number of effective ways of preventing cavities in these baby teeth.

Fluoride in toothpastes has done a remarkable job of cutting down the number of cavities in children. A pea sized drop of fluoridated paste on a soft brush is all that is needed, brushing in little circles covering all the outside, topside and inside surfaces of all the teeth. Since an amount of toothpaste is bound to be swallowed, limiting it to a pea size would reduce the possibility of ingesting too much. Fluoride drops or supplements are not needed usually because of this - the candy-tasting flavour of most of the kid's





toothpastes available makes it yummy to eat. Jessica loves to try any new tubes with cartoon characters she finds on the store shelves and she'll rank them for me, too, according to taste - my own private Consumer's Reports guide. Regina's water supply has no added fluoride, but there is a naturally occurring fluoride level, though at an amount not considered beneficial for dental health.

Too much fluoride, however, can result in fluorosis or mottling of the adult teeth, which would show up at about 6 years of age when the permanent incisors would begin to erupt. White spots or an uneven appearance of the enamel can be a sign of excess fluoride; the teeth are healthy and more resistant to decay, but the surface can show blotchy patches. Moderation is the key.

The wide range of toothbrushes, both manual and electric, can make the job of brushing a little less tedious. Although I haven't had too much trouble with brushing and flossing Jessica's teeth, a couple of toys in the sink or other distractions usually helps to get the job done quickly. Flossing is important to start especially if the teeth are tight together. I've gotten bit a number of times cleaning Jessica's teeth, and now there are flossers available (they have a short length of floss attached to a holder) that make it less of a hazard to get in that little space.

If the grooves on the back teeth are deep, they can be sealed with a plastic coating that prevents cavities. It's a simple and fast procedure especially when a child is cooperative! Jessica had it done about a year ago and wasn't too traumatized by the event. She can tell you all about it and will go into great detail about her experience at the dental office, including the prizes at the end of the appointment.

One habit that can lead to early and rampant decay is allowing a child to sleep with a bottle of milk or juice. The natural sugars in the milk or juice can quickly attack the baby teeth often appearing as dark brown or black spots along the gumline. One couple that we travelled noticed that their new daughter wasn't eating much and appeared to be in pain around her mouth most of the time. It was later discovered that their daughter's four lower teeth were decayed beyond saving and needed to be extracted.

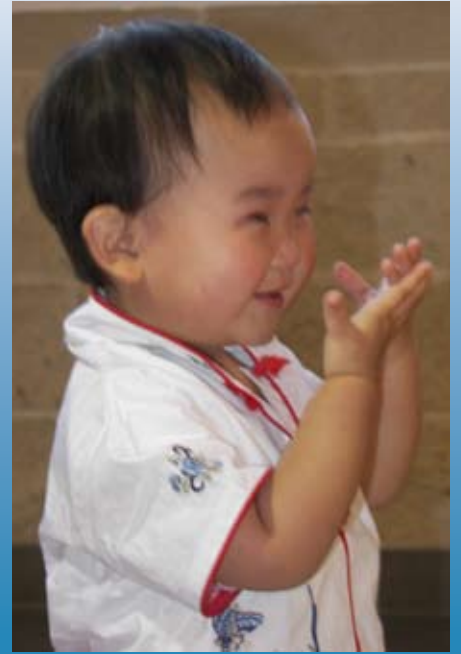
A visit to the dentist (yayi) is recommended soon after returning from overseas, as you would to the family doctor, if just to say hello. A quick assessment of the condition of the teeth can be done for your piece of mind. Thereafter, checkups every 6 to 9 months would be ideal, as Jessica would tell you.

David Mah practices general and family dentistry at the Northgate Mall and Lakeshore Mall in Regina, SK

Much of the quality of the enamel of the early teeth is determined by prenatal nutrition. The baby incisors can be discolored or weakened by medications or excess minerals taken when the fetus is developing



YEAR OF THE ... PEEK-A-BOO!



Playgroup Schedule—FCC Austin

Monday Morning Playgroup

Mondays at 10:00 AM
Contact Tyla Gilchrist (257-0231)
or email (tylag@austin.rr.com)

Friday Morning Playgroup

Fridays, 10:30-Noon, Black Hawk Subdivision
Pflugerville
Contact Alexa Hinds (agh1126@yahoo.com)
for directions or information.

Sunday Playgroup

Sundays, 2:00PM, Dick Nichols Park
Contact Pam Heins (pamelaheins@austin.rr.com)
for directions or information.

Single Parents' Group

3rd Friday, 5:30 PM
North Central Austin or group member's home.
For more information, contact Catherine Lenox
(Catherine_Lenox@txwb.uscourts.gov)

Mom's Lunch Out (without kids)

Wednesday, 12:10 pm.
Contact Abby Turner 733-2268
(donabby@sbcglobal.net)

Mom's Night Out (without kids)

Last Wednesday of the month, 6:30 pm.
Contact Sandi Sykora Ross 732-2072
(rosyk@austin.rr.com)