

For immediate release: October 16, 2019

Contact: Amy Cotton at acotton@cdhp.org and 781-330-1632 or Akilah Williams at awilliams@cdhp.org
www.cdhp.org | Twitter: @Teeth_Matter

Children’s Dental Health Project Executive Director Meg Booth to Receive Innovator Award

Dr. Edward B. Shils Entrepreneurial Fund, Inc. honors Booth for transformative leadership in children’s oral health

(Washington, DC) The Dr. Edward B. Shils Entrepreneurial Fund, Inc. will present Meg Booth, executive director of the Children’s Dental Health Project (CDHP), with the 2019 Dr. Edward B. Shils Entrepreneurial Fund, Inc. Innovator Award. It recognizes Booth’s leadership at CDHP, which the Shils Fund describes as her “tremendous efforts in transforming the status of children’s oral health” in the United States.

“Our oral health system isn’t set up to meet the needs of all children and families, but going after bold policy ideas is changing that,” says Booth. She continued, “I am proud to accept this honor on behalf of CDHP, as policy innovation has been one of its core principles. Building diverse partnerships – including within the dental industry – have also helped us drive real progress for kids. It’s part of why nearly 9 in 10 children have dental coverage today.”

Inspired by Dr. Edward B. Shils’ dedication to innovation in the dental industry, the Shils Fund was established in 2011. It annually honors individuals or organizations for promoting significant positive change in the dental community. Booth will accept the award on [October 16](#) at the New York University College of Dentistry. The program will include a keynote address by Chairman and CEO of Henry Schein, Inc., Stanley M. Bergman, a member of the Shils Fund Founder's Circle.

“Meg's contribution to serving the children of our nation embodies the Shils Fund's mission to recognize innovative, entrepreneurial approaches advancing oral health and its link to overall health,” said Steven W. Kess, President of the Dr. Edward B. Shils Entrepreneurial Fund, Inc. “Due to her dedicated leadership, policymakers at all levels are more aware than ever before of the critical need for a dental benefit to ensure a child's optimal oral health and its impact on their future potential.”

Booth has served as CDHP executive director since 2016. She also directed its policy strategy for a decade. Under her leadership, the Children’s Dental Health Project has remained an [influential force](#) expanding meaningful access to children’s dental coverage and care.

In 2009, the organization won a years-long fight to make dental care a guaranteed benefit in the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). When the program was signed in to law in 1997, pediatric dental coverage was not part of its assured benefits.

In 2010, CDHP's efforts helped to further expand children's oral health coverage with passage of the Affordable Care Act. The law includes kids' dental care as one of the essential health benefits that insurance plans are required to cover.

Today, the Children's Dental Health Project continues to innovate. Recent efforts include pushing policymakers, providers, insurers, and other key players to prioritize [oral health access during pregnancy](#), and advancing equity in children's [Medicaid dental care](#). CDHP has also [urged lawmakers](#) to ensure parents' and other adults' oral health needs are addressed in any future health reform legislation, like Medicare for All.

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The Children's Dental Health Project is a Washington, DC-based policy organization advancing solutions so that, one day, no child will suffer from tooth decay. We believe no family should be held back from its dreams due to dental disease. Learn more at www.cdhp.org, on Twitter at @Teeth_Matter or Facebook at @childrensdentalhealth.