



AISL Weekly

Friday, March 27th, 2009
Volume 45, Issue 28

A Message From The The Superintendent

It is with great admiration and sadness that we say good-bye to our outstanding Board President Mr. Michael Bowen as he, his wife Alicia and their two children are relocating to Aberdeen, Scotland. Mike has been excellent leader as he served as Board President for the past two years and worked tirelessly to better the school. As a result of Mike's departure, Mr. Dan Smith has been appointed President of the Board of Directors. I am confident Dan will lead with the same passion and focus to keep AISL moving forward as we grow, while maintaining the quality of programs that everyone has come to expect.

Attached inside the newsletter is an announcement for those who may be interested in running for a seat on the Board of Directors. I encourage all of you who may want to guide and shape the future of the school to consider putting forth your name. We currently have 3 seats that will need to be filled at the annual general election, which will be held on May 14th. This community has some amazingly talented people who could and should help serve this school community. I hope you will give serious consideration to running for a seat on the Board of Directors. Please take the time to read the attachment in the newsletter and if I can answer any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Lastly, I want to congratulate and say a big THANK YOU to the organizers of the "A Run Towards the Cure" event held last week-end. It was a wonderful event.

Just a reminder

Spring break will begin with early dismissal on April 9th at 11:00 a.m. The campus will be officially closed at 12:00 noon and will reopen on April 20th when we return to school at the normal times.

Everyday is a Great day at AISL.

Tom

Week at a Glance

Saturday March 28th

- Environmental Saturday
- Saturday Baseball & Pictures (see schedule)
- AISL Invitational Swim Meet 12-4pm

Sunday March 29th

- Campus Closed
- MUN returns from St. Petersburg, Russia

Monday March 30th

- Nothing Scheduled

Tuesday March 31st

- Nothing Scheduled

Wednesday April 1st

- Nothing Scheduled

Thursday April 2nd

- Superintendent Forum - Pool Conference Room, 1:15pm

Friday April 3rd

- Middle School Dance
- High School "Glo in the Dark" Dance - Pool Conference Room, 7-10pm

Saturday April 4th

- Saturday Baseball
- Cub Scout Leaders Meeting
- PTO Bingo Night, 3:30-6:00pm

Superintendent - Thomas Shearer 776-4535
Secondary Principal - Sharon Schauss 776-4532
Elementary Principal - Justin Smith 776-4526
Director of Admissions - John Stewart 776-4531

Behind 1004 Estates, Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria
234-1-261-7798

Library Notifications

The school librarian, Mrs. Zhu, will be sending out notices for all outstanding library books on Monday, 30th of March. Please check your child's folder to find out whether there is a notice for your child. She needs all the outstanding books returned to the library so your child's library account will not be blocked. Any question regarding your child's outstanding library books please contact Mrs. Zhu szhu@aislagos.com or go to the library to talk to her.

YOGA CLASSES

Yoga is on for the month of April only from 21st April until the 30th April. Kindly take note.

Days: Tuesdays and Thursdays
Time: 7:25AM to 8:25AM
Place: POOL CONFERENCE ROOM

For further information call Janvi at 01 7760464 or 08023042525

SPACE CAMP

If you borrowed a combination lock from Mrs. Teague (Room 208), please return the lock ASAP so that your deposit may be returned to you. Please do so before school, during lunch, or after school. Thanks for your help with this!

Middle School and High School Dances

There will be a Middle School and High School Dance on Friday, April 3rd. Middle School will be in the gym and High School will be in the Conference Room above the pool. Both dances begin at 7:00pm and end at 10:00pm. Please be sure your child has a ride home promptly at 10:00pm. The Middle School Dance costs 500 naira to enter and the High School Dance costs 1,000 naira (students will receive theme items as part of their entry fee). The dress code is casual for both. This is also a reminder that no students waiting to participate in the dance should remain on campus after the afternoon activities. Students need to make other arrangements if they cannot return home before the dance.

Please see Mrs. Holmgren or Mrs. Solmiren with questions.

Lost and Found

Please make sure that you check the Lost Property Treasure Chest outside the Hub for any lost items. All items left in the box will be donated to charity if they have not been claimed by the vacation.

Visit www.aislagos.org for School Information

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT NEXT YEAR?

Is your child in grade 5 or above? Is your child returning to AISL? Are you starting to think about next year? Are you asking yourself questions such as:

- How can I support my child's transition from Elementary to Middle School or Middle to High School?
- How are the schools (Elementary, Middle and High) different and what can I expect?
- What subjects will my child be able to select?
- What will the schedule look like?
- What are High School "credits"?
- What is IB all about in Grade 11 and 12?

If these are some of your concerns then come along to the student and parent meetings that will be held in the near future to have your questions answered. All returning students as well as those who are undecided will be expected to attend these meetings.

At these meetings, students will be issued with their core subject selection forms that they will fill out with their parents. These forms will need to be returned to classroom teachers (grade 5) or to Mr. Phipps in the Hub (Grades 8 and 10) by Friday 3rd April so that the master schedule can be created. Parents are invited to be a part of the information sessions.

Grade 5 to Grade 6 Meeting: 1pm - 2pm Tuesday 31st March

Grade 10 to Grade 11 Meeting: 2pm - 3pm Wednesday 1st April

Grade 8 to Grade 9 Meeting: 2 pm - 3pm Thursday 2nd April

All returning students, who are not in transitional years (5-6, 8-9, 10-11), will be issued with their core subject selection forms during the final week of March also to be returned by Friday 3rd April.

After School Supervision

Dear Parents,

This is a reminder that there is **NO SUPERVISION** for your child following after school activities. When evening events are planned like dances or movie nights, the idea is that students leave campus at a normal time and then return for the evening program. Students that continue to stay on campus after afternoon activities are here without supervision! We understand that some students live very far from campus, but alternative plans need to be made for the time between after school activities and the start time for the evening's events. Please help us make sure students are safely supervised at all times by helping them find an off-campus location where they can spend time between after-school activities and the evening program. We appreciate your help.

NOTES FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR



2009 Spring Invitational Swim Meet

12-4pm—AISL 2009 Spring Invitational Swim Meet & Awards Ceremony
11 international schools will compete in this exciting event
Saturday, March 28, 2009
COME SUPPORT OUR SWIMMERS!

**ES SOCCER/BASKETBALL PLAYERS, MS/HS
SOCCER/BASKETBALL PLAYERS, SWIMMERS,
AND SENATE MEMBERS: PLEASE BRING
N1200 & PICK YOUR SPORTS/SENATE T-
SHIRT UP FROM MS. OLSEN NOW!**

Thank you!

*We are grateful for the following families kindness & generosity
for opening their homes to our visiting swimmers from Lincoln
Community School for this weekend's swim meet. Your efforts
make these extraordinary events possible.*

The de la Vega Family

The Mensah Family

The Osinowo Family

The Varnai Family

The McBride Family

The Kalliger Browne Family

SPIRIT WEEK FOR GRADES K-5

Finally, the time has come for Elementary to have their SPIRIT WEEK!

Monday – Pajamas Day!



Tuesday - Sports Day!



Wednesday – Celebrity Day! **(Dress like any famous real or fictional character, movie star, singer, etc.)**

THURSDAY – FREE DRESS DAY!



RULES FOR SPIRIT WEEK:

- All clothing must be school-appropriate.
- If your child is NOT participating, he/she is still expected to wear their school uniform.

Please note Spirit Week will take place Monday, April 6th through Thursday, April 9th. Thursday is an early release day and there is no school on Friday, the 10th.

“We’ve got spirit, yes, we do! We’ve got spirit, how about you?!?!”

2009 Saturday Baseball Season



Games: Please see the new Team Picture Schedule (following page).

The Schedule of games for Saturday, March 28, 2009 will be as follows:

28-Mar-09	Field 1		Field 2		Field 3		Field 4	
	Home	Away	Home	Away	Home	Away	Home	Away
11:30 to 12:45	Tigers	Cardinals	Indians	Marlins	Royals		White Sox	Athletics
13:00 to 14:15			Red Sox	Rockies			Angels	Phillies
14:30 to 15:45			Nationals	Mets			Cubs	D'Backs
16:00 to 17:15			Pirates	Blue Jays			Rangers	Dodgers

Notes:

1. Team Pictures

- Team Pictures are before the games. See the Schedule attached.
 - Some Team's Pictures are on March 28. Others are on April 4 & April 25.
 - Pictures will take place regardless of the weather. **Be on time.**
- This is an Environmental Saturday. Games start at 11:30 AM. Please be on time.
 - Please note that there has been a **schedule change** for **Minor League Teams**.
 - Twins (Bantam), Reds (Minor) and Braves (Little League) have the week off.
 - The Royals (T-Ball) will have a practice only on March 28, 2009.
 - See the Saturday Baseball Website for a complete schedule
<http://sites.google.com/site/aislsaturdaybaseball>

Umpire Assignments for Saturday, March 28, 2009:

28-Mar-09	13:00	14:15	Field 4	Mustang League	Anne Mathers
	14:30	15:45	Field 4	Mustang League	Anne Mathers
	16:00	17:15	Field 4	Pony League	Nisse Olsen
	16:00	17:15	Field 2	Little League	Jon Welchman

Rain: Pictures will be done as per schedule, regardless of the weather.

In case of rain, please see the Baseball Website

<http://sites.google.com/site/aislsaturdaybaseball>) after 10:30 am for information on cancellation of games or contact a league commissioner (see contacts below).

Water: Please ensure your child comes to games and practices with plenty of water to drink. We have noted that several kids are showing up without any.

Questions: Direct your questions to any of the following league commissioners:

David Blackall: Email: david.blackall@exxonmobil.com; Cell: 08029837885

Stuart McGeoch: Email: S.Mcgeoch@shell.com; Cell: 08070363206

Freddy Valbuena: Email: freddyavr@hotmail.com; Cell: 07035418750

Andrew Mathers: Email: andrew.j.mathers@exxonmobil.com; Cell: 08029675207

2009 AISL Baseball Pictures Schedule

Saturday March 28, 2009

LEAGUE	TEAM	TIME
BANTAM	ATHLETICS	11.20 AM
T - BALL	TIGERS	11.35 AM
	ROYALS	11.50 AM
MINOR	ROCKIES	12.25 PM
MUSTANG	PHILLIES	12.40 PM
MINOR	METS	1.40 PM
	NATIONALS	1.55 PM
MUSTANG	CUBS	2.10 PM
LITTLE LEAGUE	PIRATES	3.00 PM
	BLUE JAYS	3.15 PM
PONY	DODGERS	3.30 PM

Saturday April 4, 2009

LEAGUE	TEAM	TIME
BANTAM	MARLINS	7.20 AM
	TWINS	7.30 AM
	INDIANS	7.40 AM
	WHITE SOX	7.50 AM
T - BALL	CARDINALS	8.15 AM
MINOR	RED SOX	9.10 AM
MUSTANG	D'BACKS	10.25 AM
	ANGELS	10.40 AM
LITTLE LEAGUE	BRAVES	11.55 AM
PONY	RANGERS	12.10 PM

Saturday April 25, 2009

LEAGUE	TEAM	TIME
MINOR	REDS	12.15 PM

2009 AISL Saturday Baseball Schedule

28-Mar-09	Field 1		Field 2		Field 3		Field 4	
	Home	Away	Home	Away	Home	Away	Home	Away
11:30 to 12:45	Tigers	Cardinals	Indians	Marlins	Royals		White Sox	Athletics
13:00 to 14:15			Red Sox	Rockies			Angels	Phillies
14:30 to 15:45			Nationals	Mets			Cubs	D'Backs
16:00 to 17:15			Pirates	Blue Jays			Rangers	Dodgers

4-Apr-09	Field 1		Field 2		Field 3		Field 4	
	Home	Away	Home	Away	Home	Away	Home	Away
08:00 to 09:15	Tigers	Royals	Marlins	White Sox	Cardinals		Twins	Indians
09:30 to 10:45			Mets	Red Sox			Phillies	Cubs
11:00 to 12:15			Rockies	Reds			D'Backs	Angels
12:30 to 13:45			Braves	Pirates			Dodgers	Rangers
14:00 to 15:15			Blue Jays	Pirates				

25-Apr-09	Field 1		Field 2		Field 3		Field 4	
	Home	Away	Home	Away	Home	Away	Home	Away
11:30 to 12:45	Royals	Cardinals	Athletics	Twins	Tigers		White Sox	Indians
13:00 to 14:15			Reds	Mets			Cubs	Angels
14:30 to 15:45			Red Sox	Nationals			Phillies	D'Backs
16:00 to 17:15			Braves	Blue Jays			Rangers	Dogers

2-May-09	Field 1		Field 2		Field 3		Field 4	
	Home	Away	Home	Away	Home	Away	Home	Away
08:00 to 09:15	Cardinals	Tigers	Twins	White Sox	Royals		Marlins	Athletics
09:30 to 10:45			Reds	Nationals			D'Backs	Phillies
11:00 to 12:15			Rockies	Mets			Angels	Cubs
12:30 to 13:45			Pirates	Braves			Dogers	Rangers
14:00 to 15:15								

*Field 1 is by Big Toy

*Field 2 is by Tennis Courts

*Field 3 is at the far end of the field, Tennis Court Side

*Field 4 is at the far end of the field, Big Toy Side

T-Ball	Mustang
Bantam	Little League
Minor	Pony



Attention Cub Scout Parents!



Pack 3803 announces the annual Pine Wood Derby this Saturday, 28 March in the AISL Gym.

Racing schedule: Racing will start 1/2 hour after the start time shown below for each of the Cub Scout groups. Please come at the times shown to allow time to weigh and register the cars before the races.

Tigers	1:30 - 3:30
Wolves	3:00 - 4:00
Bears	3:30 - 4:30
Webelos	4:00 - 6:00

If your son is still playing baseball at his start time – please ask a friend or another parent to bring the car to the gym. Then come over with your son after baseball to watch the races!.

If we have enough time, we will run a Grand Prix race of the Group Winners, and we also may have races of the Den Leaders' own cars.

Events co-ordinators still needed for these activities:

- ❖ Blue and Gold Banquet – 25 April
- ❖ Genius Night – 23 May

If you have any questions about pack activities, would like to volunteer, or learn more about cub scouting, come to the meeting on Saturday, or email the Pack Committee Chairman, Peter Grootelaar at peter@grootelaar.net

See you Saturday!.

American International School of Lagos

Board of Directors Elections

Three positions of the Board of Directors will be open for election this year. The first position is that of the Treasurer. The Treasurer advises the Board on all areas related to the financial health of the school and is currently providing leadership in the financing of the new High School project. The Treasurer also chairs the Finance Sub-Committee.

The second position is that of the Director of Fundraising. The Fundraising Director is responsible for coordinating fundraising events to ensure that the school's committed fundraising targets, crucial to the development of the new AISL High School, are met.

The final Board position is a general position. This individual will be required to serve on at least one of the Board Sub-Committees, which are Finance, Human Resources, Curriculum and Facilities. All AISL Association members are eligible to run for positions on the Board, with certain exceptions including any person who is working at AISL or whose spouse is working at AISL. There are other exceptions listed in the Board of Directors policy which is attached.

Persons who are interested in running for one of the open positions should submit a letter of interest no later than 12:00 noon on Monday, 20 April, 2009. The letter of interest should include a passport photograph of yourself, information about your background, qualifications and the reasons you are interested in serving on the Board. The letter should be submitted to Mrs. Grace Adenusi, Executive Secretary, in the Main Office. A list of candidates, along with a copy of the letters of interest, will be published in the AISL Weekly Newsletter on Friday, 24 April. Only candidates who have submitted a letter of interest by the 20 April deadline will be considered eligible for election.

The Annual Association Meeting and Board Election will be held on Thursday, 14 May, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the AISL Gymnasium. The candidates will each present a brief speech about themselves and their interest in serving on the Board as well as participate in a question and answer session. Only Association members present at the meeting will be eligible to vote. The successful candidates will be announced at the close of the meeting.

If you have any questions about becoming a candidate and/or the election process, please contact one of the members of the Board Nominating Committee. The Committee members are:

Mrs. Ekaba Davies	- 0803-313-7135
Mrs. Orietta Sotomayor-Skarstein	- 0802-966-4091
Mr. Dan Smith	- 0807-036-4218

We hope that many of you will consider this opportunity to serve the School and will come forward as a candidate for the Board.

Thank you.

The AISL Board of Directors

Attachments:

1. Policy 1.302, Board of Directors
2. Policy 1.504, Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

Retiring Board Members: Mr. Mike Bowen, Mrs. Marionette Audifferen, and Mr. Simon Hemming (serving last term of Mr. Eric Jackson).

Continuing Board Members: Mrs. Ekaba Davies, Mr. Dan Heath, Mr. Joe Lunsford, Mr. Dan Smith, Mrs. Orietta Sotomayor-Skarstein and Mrs. Vicki Hutchinson (Ambassador's Appointee).

American International School of Lagos
Board of Directors
2009 School Board Elections
Nominating Committee

The Annual Association Meeting and Board Elections will be held on Thursday, 14 May, 2009. The Board is soliciting members of the Association to serve on the Nominating Committee to run the elections this year. The main duties of the Nominating Committee will be to present a slate of candidates for the Board of Directors of not less than six (6) members of the Association in good standing who have stated in writing their qualifications and indicated their willingness to serve if elected.

Board members and Nominating Committee members should remain neutral and not campaign for any candidate. Should you wish to be considered to serve on the 2009 Nominating Committee, please contact the following Board members:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------|
| 1. Mrs. Ekaba Davies | - | 0803-313-7135 |
| 2. Mrs. Orietta Sotomayor-Skarstein | - | 0802-966-4091 |
| 3. Mr. Dan Smith | - | 0807-036-4218 |

BOARD ELECTIONS

One-third of the members of the Board of Directors, or, if not three or a multiple of three, the number nearest one-third, shall retire from office each school year. If the appointee of the U.S. Ambassador is due to retire from office then that appointee may be re-appointed for another three-year term at the discretion of the Ambassador. The election of members of the Board of Directors shall be held during an annual general meeting of the Association.

The following procedures shall be followed in preparation for conducting the election of members of the Board of Directors:

1. Members of the Board whose three-year term is to expire shall indicate to the Board whether or not they intend to be a nominee for re-election prior to the March Board meeting.
2. The Board shall form a Nominating Committee by first selecting two Board members whose terms are not expiring and/or who do not intend to be nominees for re-election. The two current Board members shall serve as Chair and Co-Chair of the Nominating Committee.
3. The Nominating Committee shall select four additional members from the Association to serve on the Nominating Committee. Members of the Nominating Committee shall remain neutral and may not, collectively or individually, campaign for any one nominee.
4. The Nominating Committee shall attempt to present a slate of nominees of not less than six (6) members of the Association in good standing who have submitted a Letter of Interest indicating their qualifications and willingness to serve if elected. Members in good standing are parents whose tuition is paid in full for the current school year.
5. When reviewing potential nominees, the Nominating Committee shall consider the following general guidelines:
 - a. Re-nomination of current Board members in order to maintain continuity of knowledge and processes.
 - b. Promotion of a healthy balance of community participation on the Board. To this extent, and to avoid possible conflicts of interest, embarrassment and misunderstanding, and to ensure that nominees, if elected, will be able to fulfill their obligations pursuant to Policy 1.504, nominees in the following categories shall be avoided:

BOARD ELECTIONS (Contd.)

- Heads of diplomatic missions
 - Too many individual from the same segment of the community or corporation
 - Persons likely to have a contractual relationship with the school
 - Persons whose job requires frequent or prolonged absences
- c. Nominees in the following categories shall not be accepted:
- Teachers regularly engaged at the school
 - Spouses of teachers
 - Persons associated with or engaged by a competing organization
6. The Nominating Committee will extend the deadline for submission of Letters of Interest if there is not at least one more nominee than positions available.
7. The slate of nominees will be made available to the members of the Association for at least three (3) weeks prior to the election, unless the deadline is extended.
8. The election will be conducted at an annual general meeting before the 15th day of May.
9. In the event of a tie, a run-off election will be conducted between the two candidates. Procedures on how the run-off election will be conducted shall be made available to Association members. Only members of the Association who were present during the election at the annual general meeting may vote in the run-off.

Newly-elected Board members shall be seated during the last regular/special Board meeting of the school year.

ADOPTED FEBRUARY 6, 1980
REVISED NOVEMBER 11, 1981
REVISED JUNE 10, 1987
REVISED FEBRUARY 16, 1988
REVISED JUNE 1, 1988
REVISED MARCH 14, 2006
REVISED FEBRUARY 21, 2008

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In the governance role, the Board has all of the duties and responsibilities assigned in the Memorandum and Articles of Association. In addition the Board has a collective as well as individual responsibilities by virtue of being a member.

As a collective body, the Board has the responsibility:

1. to comply with all applicable laws of Nigeria,
2. to establish annual Board and Administration goals in collaboration with the Superintendent as well as regularly review and update the School's Strategic Plan,
3. to contribute to the development and improvement of educational opportunities of all children and youth in the school,
4. to hire and evaluate the Superintendent who will in turn implement the policies of the school,
5. to develop personnel policies, including policies designed to attract, retain, and develop personnel needed to realize the educational objectives of the school,
6. to develop financial policies which will provide the necessary resources to fund the school program,
7. to keep the people of the community intelligently informed about the AISL program,
8. to be sensitive to the educational hopes and aspirations of the AISL community,
9. to appraise the activities of the school in light of the goals or objectives established.

Individually, Board members' are expected to perform within the following guidelines:

1. Attendance:
 - a. Official Board Meetings and Retreats: Board members are expected to attend at least 70% of the regularly-scheduled meetings and should not be absent from more than two consecutive meetings.
 - b. School Events and Functions: Board members should endeavor to attend school events and functions. The intent is to be in-touch and accessible with the community of AISL so to best represent the general interest of the school.
2. Workload: Board members are expected to make themselves available to participate in the various sub-committees formed by the board, actively participate in email and other discussions, and work on board goals and assignments.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

3. Behavior: Board members should be aware of how their individual behavior may be perceived by the community and be careful not to:
 - a. Show preference to specific staff members of AISL (lobbying for, addressing members of the community on their behalf, etc.)
 - b. Make or endorse statements that may:
 - i. cause disharmony within the Board
 - ii. bring disrepute to the
 - c. Accept any gift of more than a nominal value from:
 - i. any member of staff or their spouse
 - ii. perspective candidates for employment
 - iii. or others that may have or are seeking business with AISL.
 - d. Disrespect the confidentiality of Board Meetings and discussions.
 - e. Utilize their position for personal gain.

Any Board member who is unable to work within the guidelines stated in this policy will not be able to fully support the Board in conducting its business and in representing the general interests of the School. Recognizing that each situation is different, the Board President will be responsible for monitoring adherence to these guidelines by Board members and will work directly with the member to redress the problem. It is expected that, at any point in time during a Board member's tenure, he/she becomes unable or unwilling to meet the attendance and/or workload expectations or adhere to the behavior guidelines, that he/she will voluntarily resign from the Board without delay. If the nature of the violation is sufficient to cause concern that the work of the Board or the interest of the School are being undermined or seriously compromised, the Board President in consultation with other Board members, will initiate proceedings to remove the member from the Board. Initiation for removal proceeding requires a 2/3rd majority vote of the Board. Removal proceedings are defined in the Articles of Association of the School.

ADOPTED FEBRUARY 6, 1980
REVISED APRIL 8, 1987
REVISED JUNE 1, 1988
REVISED NOVEMBER 17, 1998
REVISED APRIL 20, 1999
REVISED MARCH 20, 2007

How It Progresses

Gum disease progresses in stages. Believe it or not, more than half of teens have some form of gum disease.

Do your gums bleed when you floss or brush your teeth? Chances are you already have the mildest form of gum disease — bleeding gums are usually a sign of **gingivitis** (pronounced: jin-juh-vy-tus). Other warning signs of gingivitis include gum tenderness, redness, or puffiness.

If plaque from teeth and gums isn't removed by good daily dental care, over time it will harden into a crust called **calculus** or **tartar**. Once tartar forms, it starts to destroy gum tissue, causing gums to bleed and pull away from the teeth. This is known as **periodontitis** (pronounced: per-ee-oh-don-ty-tus), a more advanced form of gum disease.

With periodontitis, gums become weakened and form pockets around the base of teeth. Bacteria pool in these pockets, causing further destruction of the gums. As periodontitis spreads, it damages deeper gum tissue and can eventually spread to areas of the jawbone that support the teeth. This can cause teeth to become loose and fall out. Though periodontitis is rare in teens, it can happen. If it's not treated, it can cause real trouble for your teeth.

What should you do to avoid these problems? See your dentist if you notice any of these signs of gum disease:

- bleeding of the gums that occurs regularly when brushing or flossing
- discoloration of gums (healthy gums should look pink and firm, not red, swollen, or tender)
- any sign of gums pulling away from teeth
- bad breath that won't go away
- loose teeth

Tracking It Down and Treating It

Gum disease can be sneaky, sometimes causing little or no pain or irritation before permanent damage is done to your teeth. That's why regular dentist visits are a must. With X-rays and a thorough examination, a dentist or dental hygienist can spot trouble before you know it's there.

The earlier that gum disease is caught, the better. Adopting better brushing and flossing habits can usually reverse gingivitis. Sometimes your dentist will also prescribe antibiotics or a special antibacterial mouth rinse to tackle the problem.

Once someone develops periodontitis, it isn't as easy to control. Usually there is widespread infection of the gums that needs to be treated. This may require several special treatments either by a dentist or a **periodontist**, an expert who specializes in the care of gum disease.

To be continued next week.....