

ATTACHMENT A

Strength of Evidence Supporting Best Practice Approaches

The ASTDD Best Practices Committee took a broader view of evidence to support best practice approaches for building effective state and community oral health programs. The Committee evaluated evidence in four categories: research, expert opinion, field lessons and theoretical rationale. Although all best practice approaches reported have a strong theoretical rationale, the strength of evidence from research, expert opinion and field lessons fall within a spectrum. On one end of the spectrum are promising best practice approaches, which may be supported by little research, a beginning of agreement in expert opinion, and very few field lessons evaluating effectiveness. On the other end of the spectrum are proven best practice approaches, ones that are supported by strong research, extensive expert opinion from multiple authoritative sources, and solid field lessons evaluating effectiveness.

<u>Promising</u> <u>Best Practice Approaches</u>					<u>Proven</u> <u>Best Practice Approaches</u>	
Research	+		→		Research	+++
Expert Opinion	+		→		Expert Opinion	+++
Field Lessons	+				Field Lessons	+++
Theoretical Rationale	+++				Theoretical Rationale	+++

Research

- + A few studies in dental public health or other disciplines reporting effectiveness.
- ++ Descriptive review of scientific literature supporting effectiveness.
- +++ Systematic review of scientific literature supporting effectiveness.

Expert Opinion

- + An expert group or general professional opinion supporting the practice.
- ++ One authoritative source (such as a national organization or agency) supporting the practice.
- +++ Multiple authoritative sources (including national organizations, agencies or initiatives) supporting the practice.

Field Lessons

- + Successes in state practices reported without evaluation documenting effectiveness.
- ++ Evaluation by a few states separately documenting effectiveness.
- +++ Cluster evaluation of several states (group evaluation) documenting effectiveness.

Theoretical Rationale

- +++ Only practices which are linked by strong causal reasoning to the desired outcome of improving oral health and total well-being of priority populations will be reported on this website.