

**Grant Report December 2004
Head Start Oral Health Forum
State of Ohio**

The Ohio Head Start Association, Inc. and the Ohio Department of Health, Bureau of Oral Health Services submit this grant report in response to the funding received from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) through the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) to sponsor Ohio's Head Start Oral Health Forum on April 7, 2004.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and the Ohio Head Start Association, Inc. (OHSAI) with support from KidsOhio.org (a nonprofit advocacy organization) and the other forum planning group stakeholders (Attachment A) participated in developing the original grant application, planning the forum, compiling the list of invitees and developing a strategic plan to improve the oral health of Ohio Head Start children.

Planning Process/Group

The planning group utilized information and ideas from the recommendations of the Director of Health's Task Force on Access to Dental Care; the State Agency Action Plan for Improving Access to Dental Care; Head Start assessments conducted by the University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center; and, the Head Start oral screening survey of children age 2-5 conducted by ODH as groundwork for discussion, planning and plan framework development. A facilitator was hired to guide the group through a strategic planning process to draft strategies that address prevention, oral health education and increasing access to oral health services for early Head Start and Head Start children in Ohio. The draft strategies served as a framework to initiate plan development at the forum on April 7, 2004.

Proposed Invitees/Participants

A letter of invitation and registration from ODH and OHSAI was mailed to 150 stakeholders from a diverse group of disciplines and organizations to participate in the one-day forum. There were 82 participants the day of the forum. Participants were pre-assigned to one of three workgroups based on their role and area of expertise. What resulted was a good mix of parent, educator, administrator, professional dental services representatives. The discussions in each workgroup were facilitated and recorded by members of the forum planning group. Based on observation and feedback from workgroup facilitators, recorders and the forum evaluation the networking benefits and experiences shared by participants were significant. The following are categories and numbers of attendees:

Parents 7

HS Teachers, Specialists and Directors 41
Nutritionists 1
Pediatric Dentists 4
General Dentists 1
Ohio Dental Association 2
Dental Hygienists 2
Ohio Dental Hygienist's Association 2
Physicians 1
Community Partners 3
State Agencies 4
Dental School Representatives 2
Safety Net Dental Clinics 2
Foundations 2
Advocacy Organizations 2
Ohio HS TA Consultants 5
Ohio HS Collaboration Office 1

Methods to Develop Strategic Plan

The planning group meetings and larger one-day forum took place in Columbus, Ohio in conjunction with the OHSAL quarterly meetings. Columbus is the most central location for participants to travel. Linking the meetings and forum with the OHSAL quarterly meetings ensured greater stakeholder participation and success in developing a framework for the plan. The forum planning group met 5 times beginning in early September 2003 to develop the framework for the strategic plan, the list of forum invitees and the agenda (Attachment B) for the April 7, 2004 forum.

The goals of the one-day forum were to: 1) develop a strategic plan to improve Head Start oral health components that includes enhancing prevention and oral health education as well as increasing access to oral health services; 2) secure commitment from stakeholders for support and follow-through with the strategies and activities of the action plan; and, 3) generate input for the development of an oral health technical assistance systems model for Early Head Start and Head Start that could be piloted and evaluated before statewide implementation.

The facilitator hired for the strategic planning process of the forum planning group also guided the efforts of the forum attendees. On the morning of the forum, a plenary session was held for participants to hear about the forum mission and goals; what we know about oral health and Head Start in Ohio; and, the process of strategic plan development. After the morning break, attendees were assigned to one of three workgroups: Oral Health Advocacy & Policy; Prevention and Education; and, Access, Referral, Follow-up & Network Development. Forum attendees, using the framework developed by the planning group, provided input for the strategic plan. At the end of the day workgroups were brought back together to share their work.

Follow-up to the Forum

Follow up to the forum has been comprised of the following steps:

1. The forum planning group completed the final version of the Ohio Head Start Oral Health Strategic Plan (Attachment C).
2. The strategic plan with a cover letter to be mailed out to forum participants.
3. The forum planning group has become a workgroup and will be identifying the stakeholder agencies and organizations responsible for implementing the final plan.
4. The forum planning group is developing an implementation plan based on the final strategic plan.
5. The strategic plan will be posted on the Ohio Head Start Association, Inc. web site.
6. Strategies and activities from the plan are already being addressed. Contracts between ODH and the following agencies are in place:

- **Greater Cincinnati Oral Health Counsel** to develop and pilot test a rural oral health technical assistance approach that can be replicated by Head Start in other rural areas.

- **Cuyahoga County Board of Health** to develop and pilot test an urban oral health technical assistance approach that can be replicated by Head Start in other urban areas..

- **Columbus Children's Hospital Pediatric Dentistry Residency Program** to develop a strategic plan for increasing the number of dentists willing to treat Head Start children.

Ohio Head Start Oral Health Forum Planning Group

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**Ohio Head Start Oral Health Forum
April 7, 2004**

8:30 a.m.	Registration
9:00 a.m.	Opening Welcome Barbara Haxton Executive Director Ohio Head Start Association, Inc. Anne Harnish Assistant Director Ohio Department of Health Forum Mission and Goals Beverly Conley Forum Facilitator
9:15 a.m.	Head Start – Its Mission James A. Scott, Jr., Ph.D., Director Head Start State Collaboration Office Ohio Department of Education
9:30 a.m.	What we know about oral health and Head Start in Ohio Mark D. Siegal, DDS, MPH, Chief Bureau of Oral Health Services Ohio Department of Health
9:55 a.m.	Head Start Promising Approaches Barbara Winter, RD, LD Hamilton County Education Service Center Teresa Streitenberger Community Action Commission of Fayette County
10:15 a.m.	Forum Process for Action Plan Framework Development Beverly Conley Forum Facilitator
10:30 a.m.	Break
10:45 a.m.	Action Plan Workgroups
12:00 p.m.	Working Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Action Plan Workgroups
2:00	Reports from workgroups Beverly Conley Forum Facilitator
3:00 p.m.	Next Steps: Where do we go from here?
3:30 p.m.	Forum Evaluation and Adjourn

Ohio Head Start Oral Health Strategic Plan

Strategy I: Establish and maintain a standing Head Start oral health workgroup to finalize, execute and monitor progress on the Head Start oral health plan for improving the oral health of Head Start children.

Activities:

1. Enlist partners interested in the oral health of Head Start children. (Workgroup members may include representatives of Head Start programs, government and non-governmental agencies, organizations and advocacy groups.)
2. Review and revise the draft strategic plan developed at the April 2004 Head Start Oral Health Forum.
 - a. Disseminate final strategic plan to forum attendees.
3. Develop an implementation plan from the revised strategic plan.
 - a. Form subcommittees (e.g., policy/advocacy, prevention, access), as necessary.
4. The oral health workgroup will meet on a regular basis, either in person or by conference call, to facilitate implementation of the plan and to monitor progress.

Strategy II: The Ohio Head Start Association, Inc. (OHSAI) and oral health advocates will seek to influence public policy that affects the oral health of Head Start children.

Activities:

1. OHSAI will be an active participant in the Ohio Coalition for Oral Health (OCOH) and will serve as a facilitator of OHSAI member action needed by OCOH, particularly on policy issues.
2. Advocate for the oral health of Head Start children by participating in activities that will influence elected officials.
 - a. Develop oral health-specific testimony that is incorporated into OHSAI testimony at public hearings; and,
 - b. Develop Head Start-specific testimony that is incorporated into oral health advocate testimony at public hearings.
3. Disseminate strategic and implementation plans among OHSAI members.

Strategy III: Maintain Head Start oral health data in readily available formats that are adaptable for use by various target groups (e.g., elected officials, parents, Head Start agency boards and Head Start staff; other agencies, organizations and advocacy groups).

Activities:

1. OHSAI and ODH will collect existing materials and data (Program Information Report and ODH data on oral health and dental care in Head Start).
2. Create a one-page Ohio Head Start Oral Health issue sheet designed to be used for education of public, elected officials and Head Start Administrative staff. The sheet should be made readily available via the internet, as well as printed and disseminated widely.
3. ODH will maintain Head Start oral health data and information on its website.

Strategy IV: Create an ongoing program of professional development for Head Start programs on the importance of oral health and accessing dental care for Head Start children.

Activities:

1. Develop written summaries of best practices in Head Start oral health and “how-to” materials for implementing them (use the primary care dentist strategic plan from VI.5. in developing these summaries). Examples of best practices include:
 - a. Getting to know local dentists and front office personnel;
 - b. Approaching dentists to examine and provide follow-up treatment for Head Start children;
 - c. Providing recognition for significant dental providers; and,
 - d. Educating dentists on Medicaid (e.g., electronic billing, reimbursement rates).
2. Get approval of the OHSAI Advisory Group and Executive Board to disseminate best practice summaries and “how-to” materials to Head Start Program Administration staff.
 - a. Incorporate written summaries and “how-to” materials into OHSAI Advisory Group Orientation Manual.
3. Work through the OHSAI Health Advisory Board to plan and provide, on a regular basis, an oral health track twice a year at OHSAI meetings. Training will include the following, as well as other pertinent topics:
 - a. Sharing of best practices by selected Head Start programs;
 - b. How Head Start program staff should prioritize children according to dental treatment need and base follow-up efforts on that prioritization; and
 - c. Effectively building relationships and working with dental offices.
4. Use the OHSAI newsletter for disseminating Head Start oral health skills information.
5. The OHSAI will solicit nominations for the yearly Head Start Healthy Dental Heroes award.

Strategy V: Identify and/or develop and implement a program that motivates Head Start parents to get dental exams completed and follow through with necessary treatment.

Activities:

1. Work through the OHSAI Parent Affiliate and Family and Community Partnerships to plan and provide on a regular basis an oral health track at OHSAI Parent Roundtable meetings.
2. Train HS staff to use Family and Partnership Agreements to promote oral health by:
 - a. Creating parent incentive programs (e.g., gift card raffles, donated gift baskets, awards for sites with highest percentage of dental visits completed, coupon points for meeting program requirements/ volunteering/ riding bus, parent appreciation day);
 - b. Creating and implementing parent oral health mentor or peer-to-peer programs;
 - c. Encouraging Head Start staff to cultivate relationships with parents (e.g., by asking questions at the home visit, advocating for child oral health, finding out why parents don't want to take their child to the dentist); and,
 - d. Encouraging Head Start staff to be role models for Head Start parents by brushing teeth with the children in the classroom.

Strategy VI: Identify and/or develop, pilot test, evaluate and disseminate an Ohio model oral health project for Head Start programs that is consistent with the state-of-the-science.

Activities:

1. The ODH will take the lead in researching existing programs, practices/policies from other states and forming a workgroup to assist in developing an Ohio model project that may include:
 - a. The use of fluoride varnish by local pediatricians and Head Start centers
 - b. Tooth brushing
 - Develop specific recommendations for Head Start (e.g., how often, methods, mechanism to make it fun, responsibilities)
 - c. Fluoride tablets (in which geographic areas, mechanism for center-based program)
2. The ODH Bureau of Nutrition Services will take the lead in researching existing Head Start nutrition education and practices/policies models from other states and forming a workgroup to assist in developing an Ohio model. The workgroup will consider materials from the Ohio Nutrition

- Council and the Child and Adult Care Food Program., as well as USDA Guidelines.
3. Create a technical assistance (TA) model dedicated to carrying out the oral health component of the Head Start Performance Standards.
 - a. Conduct a pilot of the TA model.
 - b. Evaluate the pilot.
 - c. Incorporate findings of the pilot into statewide Head Start Oral Health Strategic Plan.
 4. Disseminate the TA model in a targeted fashion using PRISM to identify projects with greatest need.
 - a. Using PIR data, monitor progress of HS programs using the new TA model.
 5. Develop a strategic plan for increasing the number of dentists willing to treat Head Start children.