

# Oral Health Resources to Support Head Start Programs

## National Center on Health Dental Hygienist Liaison Webinar

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### **Slide 1: Title**

Good afternoon, and thanks to all of you for participating in the National Center on Health Dental Hygienist Liaisons webinar today. And a special thank you to Kathy Geurink and Chris Wood for coordinating it.

It's a pleasure to have the opportunity to share information about the National Center on Health's oral health activities to support Head Start programs, with the ultimate goal of improving oral health services for all pregnant women, infants, and children enrolled in Head Start. The state dental hygienist liaisons provide important contributions to make our efforts successful, and I'd like to extend our sincere appreciation to you.

### **Slide 2: Educational Objective**

Today's webinar has two educational objectives for participants. The first is to be able describe the National Center on Health's role in identifying, developing, and disseminating resources.

For the oral health project, this means we identify and review existing materials focusing on health promotion, disease prevention, and early intervention, and we also develop new materials to meet pressing needs. But that's half of the task; we also share information about these materials to help support Head Start staff, families, and health professionals who serve Head Start participants.

### **Slide 3: Educational Objective**

The webinar's second educational objective is to be able to identify oral health resources that dental hygienist liaisons can use to support Head Start programs in their states. The good news is that there are a variety of available resources, such as curricula, manuals, tip sheets, newsletters, booklets, brochures, and videos. I'll highlight a few materials developed by the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center and by the National Center on Health and show you where to go for additional resources.

### **Slide 4: *Choose and Use: Head Start Oral Health Curricula***

In response to many requests for curricula, the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center developed an online tool, *Choose and Use: Head Start Oral Health Curricula*. This tool is an easy and quick way to look for curricula to meet your needs or to share with others. For example, it can be used to find a curriculum to teach Head Start staff about fluoride varnish or about oral hygiene practices to share with parents.

The tool includes four sections, and each section has several options you can check to help tailor your search:

- User (who will use the curriculum): Early Head Start staff, Head Start staff, and health professionals
- Intended audience (who will receive the information): Children, pregnant women and parents, Early Head Start and Head Start staff, and health professionals
- Topics addressed in the curriculum: For example, oral health basics, fluoride, injury, and children with special health care needs
- Availability (price and format): Available at no charge or for a fee, and available online or in print

**Slide 5: *Choose and Use: Head Start Oral Health Curricula***

As a demonstration to mimic the experience of using the tool, let's say you received a request from a Head Start program for a curriculum for staff to teach children about oral health and nutrition. The program has no funds to purchase educational materials and needs the curriculum to teach a class next week. Sound familiar? Checking the boxes in each section of the tool, you'll be pleased to learn that there are several options for you to share with the Head Start program.

**Slide 6: *Choose and Use: Head Start Oral Health Curricula***

Your search identified five curricula, and the first three are shown here. To view a curriculum, you can click on the website URL and have immediate access to it. I hope this demonstrated that the tool is an easy and quick way to look for curricula.

**Slide 7: *Open Wide: Oral Health Training for Health Professionals***

One of the curricula included in *Choose and Use* is *Open Wide: Oral Health Training for Health Professionals*. It is designed to help individuals working in community settings like Head Start and WIC promote oral health. The curriculum consists of four modules and shares information about tooth decay, risk and preventive factors for tooth decay, oral health risk assessment and screening, and anticipatory guidance for parents. On average, each module takes about 30 minutes to complete. For those involved in training health professionals, the curriculum includes a companion presentation.

**Slide 8: *What You Should Know and How You Can Help Tip Sheet Series***

To share information about Head Start with health professionals, use the tip sheet series *What You Should Know and How You Can Help*. There is a tip sheet for dentists, one for dental hygienists, and one for medical professionals. Each tip sheet includes an overview of the Head Start program and participants, information on children's oral health status and access to services, and ways health professionals can provide oral health services to Head Start participants.

**Slide 9: *Be an Oral Health Champion Booklet and Poster***

The booklet and poster *Be an Oral Health Champion* were developed to help Head Start staff become aware of problems children with poor oral health may experience. They feature simple ideas for promoting oral health and preventing oral disease in young children.

### **Slide 10: Brochures**

The last items produced by the resource center that I'd like to mention are brochures for pregnant women and for parents of babies and young children. The brochures include information about brushing teeth, eating healthy foods, and getting regular dental check-ups and treatment. The brochures are written at the fourth- to sixth-grade reading level to make the information easy for everyone to understand and are available in English and in Spanish.

### **Slide 11: National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center Order Form**

All materials produced by the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center are available electronically. Or you can order print copies of the publications using the online order form. To help you quickly find materials on the order form, note that materials for consumers are listed first, followed by materials for professionals. Each title is linked to the electronic copy, if you wish to review the publication before ordering it. You can request single or multiple copies of each publication, all available at no charge.

### **Slide 12: Tip Sheets Series for Head Start Health Managers and Families**

One of the first projects for the National Center on Health was to develop a series of eight topical tip sheets to provide simple, key messages for Head Start health managers and families. Topics addressed include active play, health literacy, mental health, oral health, and injury prevention. The tip sheets on oral health provide information to share with health managers, tips for pregnant women and parents for promoting good oral health (for example, oral health care is safe during pregnancy, tooth decay is preventable, parents should brush their baby's teeth), and a list of key resources.

### **Slide 13: *Brush Up on Oral Health* Newsletter**

Another resource that I'd like to share is *Brush Up on Oral Health*, a monthly electronic newsletter for Head Start staff, and health professionals. The first issue was released in September 2012. Each issue provides information on current practice, practical tips for Head Start staff and parents for promoting good oral health, and a simple recipe for a healthy snack that children can make as a class project or at home with their families.

All issues are available online, or you can become a subscriber and we'll send each monthly issue to you.

### **Slide 14: *Brush Up on Oral Health* Newsletter**

The newsletter has featured a variety of topics, including the importance of oral health for a child's school readiness; toothbrushing, including the use of fluoridated toothpaste and toothbrushing in the classroom; and oral health literacy, why it is important, and what Head Start staff can do to improve it.

Future topics for the newsletter include the oral health needs of children with disabilities to be featured in July, oral health and home visiting to be discussed in August, and oral health and case management to be featured in September. We welcome your feedback on the newsletter and suggestions for topics.

**Slide 15: Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center**

The main place for accessing information and materials related to Head Start is the Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center website, commonly known as ECLKC. Within this site, there is a section specifically focusing on oral health. On the landing (or main) page, you'll find information on the upper right corner from the Office of Head Start, including the Head Start program performance standards, policy clarifications, and program instructions. The page also highlights four key materials. One of them is Matthew's Story, a compelling video about how an Early Head Start program made a difference in Matthew's life by improving his oral health.

**Slide 16: Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center**

ECLKC's oral health section also contains a collection of materials on a variety of topics for different audiences. This area of the site is currently under construction but will be available very soon. You'll find materials organized into three categories: (1) assessment, follow-up, and treatment; (2) education activities; and (3) policies and procedures.

**Slide 17: Assessment, Follow-Up, and Treatment**

The Assessment, Follow-Up, and Treatment page is live and you'll find materials related to establishing a dental home; about medications, aids, or equipment for dental conditions; and about preventive services like topical fluoride treatments. The Policies and Procedures page should be live next week. Please continue to check the site for updates!

**Slide 18: National Center on Health Contact Information**

Now that you've heard my presentation, I hope you agree that there are many resources currently available for you to use and share with others to support Head Start programs.

In closing, I'd like to thank you again for your involvement in National Center on Health's oral health activities. If you have any ideas for working together to improve oral health services for Head Start participants and their families, please don't hesitate to contact me.

**Slide 19: Questions**