



By Bev Isman, RDH, MPH, ELS

It seems we ushered in 2023 with some really horrid weather that caused damage and power outages, created flight meltdowns, and generally interfered with our usual routines. On a more positive note, COVID-19 cases are decreasing and some areas are getting record snow for skiing and rain to help with the drought. ASTDD marched bravely on, providing technical assistance, offering webinars and communities of practice (CoP), developing and revising resource materials, and planning for our annual virtual business meeting and the April National Oral Health Conference (NOHC).

Board of Directors, State Dental Director Calls and National Partnerships

The ASTDD Board of Directors (BOD) held calls on January 9 and February 13. Topics for discussion primarily focused on the ASTDD Virtual Business Meeting and National Oral Health Conference (NOHC) plans, nominations to fill BOD positions for 2023, searching for an ASTDD Data and Oral Health Surveillance Trainee, and consultant and partner updates.

Dental directors continue to meet virtually and via email to provide information and support to each other. Email and listserv topics included: reminders about completion of the ASTDD bi-annual salary survey and attendance at the webcast on *How to Complete the 2023 State Synopses*, and questions related to direct reimbursement to dental hygienists by Medicaid, and Medicaid coverage of general anesthesia or IV sedation in the dental office. A February 17 call featured a presentation by Burt Edelstein on *MySmile Buddy*. As described on a Columbia University website, “MySmileBuddy is a mobile application to guide health workers assessing a child's risk for early childhood caries (ECC) and counseling that child's family on preventative lifestyle changes. Columbia University has partnered with Dr. Burton Edelstein of the College of Dental Medicine to propose an improved risk assessment for ECC, and to develop and test the MySmileBuddy tool. MySmileBuddy is funded by the NIH to address their Challenge Area on Health Disparities: Trans-disciplinary Research to Integrate the Biological and Non-biological Determinants of Health to Address Health Disparities. Health workers and families using MySmileBuddy will supplement their face-to-face interaction with the use of MySmileBuddy's mobile application on a tablet computer that calculates risk for ECC and assists health workers in providing educational and motivational activities about oral health.”

Congratulations to Chris Farrell who has been selected to participate in the 2023 Medicaid and CHIP Oral Health Initiative Workgroup that is being convened by Mathematica. The Workgroup's task is to assess current gaps related to oral health and access to care for Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries and to recommend strategic priorities for the next phase of the CMS Oral Health Initiative.

The Oral Health Progress and Equity Network (OPEN) has restructured and solicited applications for their Response Teams. Chris Wood has been chosen to continue on the National Oral Health Connection Team (NOHCT) and Kimberlie Payne will still serve on a Regional Oral Health Connection Team (ROHTC) as the state representative for Arizona. OPEN held a Transition Overview webinar on January 24.

Peer and Member Support Program

By the end of February, we had four new dental directors participating in the mentoring program: Nelly Chawla (IN) with mentor Mona Van Kanegan, Rachel Sizemore (AR) with Robin Miller (VT), Stacey Swilling (UT) with Frances Wise (AK), and Mike Tredway (SC) with Chris Farrell (MI). Lori Cofano oriented three other new directors, Rhonda Stephens (NC), Timothy Lopez (NM), and Erin Rollins (MT). Lori revised the Mentoring Guide and her letter to mentors. Kimberlie Payne contacted 59 new ASTDD associate members during January and February. A Peer Support Discussion ZOOM call was held on January 23. Cheri Kiefer and Dr Jackie Nord presented on a program North Dakota is using to recruit new dentists. Jennifer Holtzman from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and her workforce staff were not able to present but provided several resource links: <https://data.hrsa.gov/hdw/tools/findgrantswidget.aspx> and <https://www.hrsa.gov/oral-health> where people can see the HRSA workforce application narratives and draw on those for future funding ideas.



Updated ASTDD S/TOHP Competencies

In the last *Roundup* issue I reported on the updated [S/TOHP Competencies](#) and the field test in Vermont.



During January and February, I also field tested the process and materials with the California Oral Health Program, a very different experience as they have more than 25 staff. Jay Kumar, dental director, and most staff members have been telecommuting since the start of the COVID pandemic so this was the first time the whole team was meeting in person and getting to know each other. We built time into the agenda for

expanded introductions, networking, and discussions about personal strengths and opportunities for teambuilding and professional development. Each team member completed the Individual Competencies Assessment and the leadership team completed some of the other Program Assessment tools. Discussion during the five-hour session focused on program accomplishment and future plans, how each person can contribute unique skills and complementary skills to activities and projects, and how to best use the skills and resources of community and health department partners. Several resources were shared before and after the meeting. The staff is still in the process of completing the feedback forms and creating action plans. Thanks especially to Jay Kumar, Rosanna Jackson, and Kimberly Steele for arranging logistics and organizing all the paperwork. Other states that might have questions about the materials or want to schedule an in-person session should contact Bev Isman (bev.isman@comcast.net) or Chris Wood (cwood@astdd.org).

Basic Screening Survey (BSS) and Oral Health Surveillance Technical Assistance (TA)

Kathy Phipps and Mike Manz, ASTDD data subject matter experts, provided TA to 16 states for BSS or other surveillance assistance in January and February. The BSS CoP held a call on February 23 with 23 attendees and much sharing of information from the states. Discussion and comments in the chat box focused on the following topics:

- Follow-up on data retention for CDC funded states. For electronic data, what protocol or method is followed to destroy the data after the stipulated period of retention has elapsed?
- Using the scanning function on phones to record state student ID numbers.
- What are suggestions for disseminating findings and how do they use these findings to support program activities? What are states' successes and lessons learned?
- What has been the primary source of funding for your BSS? How has that resource been sustained?
- Who has partnered with Tribal Organizations?
- Data collection form: What information is being requested from schools? Are we collecting any demographic information? How can we keep things easy for school?

ASTDD recently announced we are seeking an hourly Data and Oral Health Surveillance Trainee to be mentored by Kathy Phipps and Mike Manz to provide TA to states and updating resource documents. Interviews started in February. Mentoring will start in March. Mike Manz continued updating the emergency department (ED) literature research review document, the ED research references document, and monitoring for updating other ED surveillance documents. Kathy sent 2023 Synopses forms to the states and gave a webinar on January 25 on how to complete the forms.

Mike and Kathy have been planning the *From Sampling to Analysis: A Hands-on Workshop for Epidemiologists and Analysts* sessions to be spread across two days, Saturday April 15 from 1:00-5:00 and Sunday April 16 from 8:00 – 12:00. Hopefully many of you have signed up for the workshop! Also, if you aren't attending that workshop, consider attending the *Resources for Needs Assessments and Oral Health Improvement Plans* weekend workshop that will feature discussions about revisions to the *ASTDD Seven-Step Model* and considerations for developing, disseminating, implementing and tracking progress on State Oral Health Improvement Plans. Sahiti Bhaskara, Beverly Isman, and Kimberlie Payne will be the facilitators. Kathy Phipps and Shannon Conroy from CA and Maryanne Goss from CT will present a session on Tuesday April 18 from 2:45-4:15 on *Optimizing Methods to Collect Demographic Data for the Children's Basic Screening Survey*.

Communications Committee (CC)



The CC met January 24 and the Communication CoP met January 18; the CCoP topic was e-newsletters. Questions addressed were: Does your SOHP prepare this kind of newsletter? If not, have you considered doing so? How often would you want to send a newsletter? What are the key obstacles to starting and sustaining such a newsletter? What benefits could you envision from building a newsletter into your ongoing outreach efforts?). Participants shared many thoughts in the Chat Box and verbally.

The Social Media Workgroup (SMWG) has begun providing social media technical assistance to three states. Missouri had their first TA call in January while Minnesota and Arkansas will be scheduled in March. This is a pilot program designed to help states get over the hurdle of using social media and assist them in building a social media presence in their communities.

The CC is going to be very active at the NOHC. Kimberlie Payne coordinates the ASTDD exhibit table and will also facilitate a roundtable on *ASTDD Resources Galore*. Don't forget to attend Matt Jacob's weekend

workshop on Sunday April 16 from 1:00-3:00 on *Clear Writing—Strategies to Enhance Reports, Newsletters or Other Products* and John Welby’s Roundtable on Tuesday April 18 from 12:45-3:30 on *Creating Your Best Messages*.

Matt Jacob and John Welby conducted an interactive workshop on *Foundational Strategies for Effective Communication* for dental public health residents at the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR). The three-hour training was developed at the request of Renée W. Joskow DDS, CAPT, US Public Health Service and Senior Advisor to the NIDCR Director.

Conducted virtually in two sessions — one in December and a second in January — session one provided an overview of the fundamental principles of strategic communication while also recommending strategies for preparing briefings and responding to the media. These strategies included tips for creating effective soundbites and staying on message. The second session saw participants put their communication skills into practice as they engaged in one of three media scenarios:

- a mock radio interview on exposure to fluoride and neurotoxicity
- a briefing on emerging science and promising technologies in oral health; and
- drafting an e-newsletter article on oral health and aging.

Members of the group shared their scenario experiences and the instructors pointed out strengths and weaknesses as group learning took place through lively discussion and robust interaction.

Dental Public Health Policy Committee (DPHPC) and Best Practices Committee (BPC)

During their monthly meetings, the DPHPC continued to review and annotate a list of ASTDD documents older than five years and checking with several potential resource people about updates. Authors are in the process of updating a policy statement on Dental Amalgam and Restorative Materials, and a policy statement on Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), and Improving Oral Health Equity, should be ready for posting in March. There will be a poster at the NOHC on the development of this SDOH policy statement. Other statements are also being discussed. A brief discussion of the [Reducing Opioid Prescribing by Oral Health Professionals](#) Policy Statement will be included in an NOHC panel on Tuesday April 18 at 10:00am, *A Collaborative Research Project for Reducing Opioid Use by Dental Providers in the Management of Acute Dental Pain*, that features the RESPITE Project led by University of Pittsburgh and American Dental Association researchers, with participation by ASTDD.

BPC workgroups and authors have been working on two BPARs: *Oral Health of Older Adults (Age 65 and Older)* and the update to *Prevention and Control of Early Childhood Tooth Decay (ECC)*. The *Statutory Mandate for a State Oral Health Program* BPAR has been archived. The *Best Practices and Innovative Approaches to Strengthen School-Based Dental Sealant Programs* webinar announcement was shared with the National Association of School Nurses and the School-Based Health Alliance. There were 1,000 people registered and more than 600 participated in the CareQuest Institute webinar on February 23. The link to the live webinar

Feedback from the webinar included:
This webinar helps our outreach activities
I plan to share the recently released best-practice report with our contractors who deliver school sealant programs in my state.

on the CareQuest website is [here](#). Plan to attend the NOHC roundtable, *School-Based Dental Sealants Programs: A Best Practice Approach Report Update*.

The BPC evaluation workgroup met again on January 25 and discussed possible options such as pop-up forms for getting feedback from users on BPARs. The workgroup will meet again in March after discussing options with our website contractor.

Healthy Aging Committee (HAC)

HAC members are on the workgroup developing the *Oral Health of Older Adults (Age 65 and Older) BPAR*. Lori Cofano participated in a February 17 webinar, *7 Things*, sponsored by the Center for Oral Disease Prevention & Population Health Research (COPPR) at the University of Colorado. Sarah Dirks, a HAC member and CU professor, presented the dental perspective while Sophie Clark presented the medical perspective on the seven things they would want the other health care professional to know on geriatric primary care.

School and Adolescent Oral Health Committee (SAOHC) and Dental Sealant Subject Matter Expert



The SAOHC will not be presenting at the NOHC this year but will meet during lunch on Monday April 17. Sandy Tesch, ASTDD dental sealant coordinator, has fielded several questions from states. She regularly monitors CDC-funded states dental sealant group listserv and posts information on upcoming sealant-related events and resources; there were 10 posts during January and February.

McAllister Castelaz, President of the American Mobile & Teledentistry Alliance (AMTA), will be combining the *School-Based/School-Linked Mobile or Portable Dental Services policy statement* and the *Mobile Portable Dental Services in Preschool and School Settings: Complex Issues policy statement*. An advisory workgroup has been formed and an initial outline has been created. The advisory workgroup will meet on March 23 to discuss next steps.

Sandy and Lori participated in two Organization for Safety and Asepsis Prevention (OSAP)/CDC listening sessions and provided input regarding updates about current infection, prevention and control resources related to school-based sealant programs. This information will inform the update to CDC's Infection Control Guidelines. The Dental Sealant CoP call on February 17 featured guest speaker Matt Zaborowski discussing results from an American Dental Association (ADA) survey on dental sealant programs and asking sealant program coordinators for input on the survey's content, topics, and question format. He anticipates doing a follow up survey in the summer of 2023. The Sealant CoP is now open to all states, not just CDC-funded states. Check out the newly posted resources on the [ASTDD sealant resources webpage](#), infographics from Colorado and West Virginia on school-based oral health that includes data from their school sealant program.

Fluorides Committee (FC)

The Fluorides Committee held monthly meetings. The Community Water Fluoridation (CWF) CoP met on January 17 and was attended by about 59 individuals. It featured Robin Miller, Oral Health Director for Vermont, and Dustin Jurgenson, the state fluoridation coordinator, relating a "cautionary tale" about their

recent, nationally covered experience when a water system operator unilaterally decided to lower the fluoride level for several years. The session also included discussion of ASTDD developing “tip sheets” for talking points on fluoride additive shortages and notification language when CWF is stopped, regardless of the reason. We are following up on these suggestions. CWF CoP meetings are now generally open to the Fluorides Committee and ASTDD’s CWF discussion list.

The ASTDD letter to the editor regarding issues with the *Critical Windows of Fluoride Neurotoxicity in Canadian Children* article by L Farmus and colleagues (2021) has been published electronically by the *Journal of Environmental Research*. It is available at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envres.2021.111315>.

There are several fluoridation sessions during the NOHC. Matt Jacob and Johnny Johnson are presenting a weekend workshop on Saturday April 15 from 8:00-11:00, *Using Targeted Briefings to Strengthen Partners’ Knowledge of Water Fluoridation*. Monday, April 17 from 2:30 to 4:00 Tracy Boehmer and Johnny Johnson are presenting, *Are Your Water Systems Properly Fluoridating? What to Know and How to Educate*. CDC is sponsoring two sessions: Monday, April 17 from 4:30 to 5:30, *CDC Water Fluoridation 101*, and then immediately following from 5:30 to 6:30, *CDC Community Water Fluoridation Update*.

Judy Feinstein sent three Fluoridation Activity Updates and Alerts during January and February and a recent one that covered alerts through March 2. She sent follow up emails to contacts in Oklahoma, Missouri, Michigan, West Virginia and Vermont.

National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS)



One way that we keep the Dental Hygienist Liaisons (DHLs) informed is through regular postings on the DHL Project discussion list. During January and February there were 26 postings. In addition to the critical but routine work of administration and providing technical assistance to all the state DHLs and Regional DHL Coordinators (RDHLCs), Kathy Hunt (Lead) and Gina Sharps (co-lead) also oversaw the following activities:

- Created a roundtable presentation, *Oral Health and Head Start: Something to Smile About!* for the NOHC
- Continued planning for an exhibit at the 2023 American Dental Hygienists’ (ADHA) Conference in Chicago in July
- Began planning for the RDHLC annual meeting to be held in Salt Lake City in August
- Collaborated with Region IV and Region XI DHL Coordinators on upcoming regional presentations
- Planned and hosted our 2nd quarter call with RDHLCs
- Planned and presented a webinar for DHLs on National Children’s Dental Health Month activities.

We currently have vacancies in the following states: Montana, Wyoming, Northern California, and West Virginia. If you know of anyone that might be interested in filling this volunteer role, please contact Kathy at Khunt.dhl@gmail.com. They need to be a member of ADHA but can use the annual expense allowance the project provides to help with that cost.

Consortium for Oral Health Systems Integration and Improvement (COHSII)



ASTDD consultants continued to participate in learning collaborative webinars, calls, and TA activities. They also assist with COHSII outreach and TA for 50 states, the District of Columbia, and US jurisdictions, especially those that selected the Title V national performance measure on oral health (NPM 13). In March and April, COHSII staff and consultants are conducting interviews by appointment with MCH staff in American Samoa, District of Columbia, Guam, Palau, Puerto Rico, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and US Virgin Islands. The purpose of the interviews is to gain an understanding of lessons learned, challenges, and accomplishments related to addressing NPM 13 and to compile the information into a report. The project also hopes to learn about needs for technical assistance for improving oral health care for the MCH population. Last year, COHSII collected information from fourteen states about their efforts related to addressing NPM 13 (see [Title V National Performance Measure 13 \(Oral Health\): Fiscal Year 2021 Snapshot.](#))

COHSII has also shared two resource announcements.

- [Promoting Oral Health During Pregnancy: Update on Activities—February 2023](#). The update presents federal policies and programs focused on ensuring that overall health care, including oral health care, is available to women during pregnancy and the postpartum period and summaries of national and state resources and journal articles. Find this issue and past issues of *Promoting Oral Health During Pregnancy: Update on Activities* online.
- [Open Wide: Oral Health Training for Health Professionals and Early Childhood Professionals—Second Edition](#), is a series of four modules designed to help professionals working in programs (e.g., Head Start, home visiting, WIC) promote oral health while promoting overall health for children from birth to age six. The curriculum presents information about tooth decay, risk factors, and prevention; explains how to perform an oral health risk assessment and screening; and highlights anticipatory guidance to share with parents. After completing the modules, register to take the post-tests to receive a certificate of completion.



The Oral Health Resource Center (OHRC) is preparing for two roundtable presentations at NOHC:

- *Networks for Oral Health Integration (NOHI) Within the MCH Safety Net and the NOHI Learning Collaborative: An Overview*
- *Integrating Oral Health Care and Primary Care Learning Collaborative: A State and Local Partnership: Project Framework and Early Findings.*

Evaluation Activities

The ASTDD Evaluators continue to provide general assistance and TA to CDC-funded evaluators through one-on-one consultation, ASTDD's evaluation listserv, and review of states' annual evaluation reports and progress updates. Since Equity is essential to any program, the evaluators wanted to address how people integrate equity into evaluation. Via the discussion listserv, they shared some helpful resources for navigating the realm of equity in oral health evaluation. A February 9 *Evaluation Plan Reboot* webinar on revising evaluation plans was held with 32 attendees from 18 states, plus an additional eight support staff. The webinar provided an overview of typical implementation challenges, pandemic related challenges, and how to implement evaluation plan changes. There was also an opportunity for peer-to-peer engagement to discuss barriers and roadblocks to evaluation plan implementation, situations in which evaluation plans need to be adapted, and ways to adapt existing evaluation plans. Don't forget to sign up to attend the NOHC weekend workshop, *Evaluation Report Makeover Bootcamp*, scheduled on Sunday April 16 from 1:30-3:30. CDC-funded states can also sign up for in-person consultation during the NOHC.

National Oral Health Conference (NOHC) Update



APRIL 17-19, 2023
AT THE DOUBLETREE BY HILTON
UNIVERSAL STUDIOS, ORLANDO, FL
WEEKEND WORKSHOPS
APRIL 15-16, 2023



PRESENTED BY:



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The NOHC in Orlando is fast approaching so **we hope everyone has registered as there will be no onsite registration and there will not be a virtual component.** NOHC offers educational sessions on a diverse array of topics by leaders in the field and is designed for dentists, dental hygienists, health researchers, dental/health educators, legislators, public health officials, Medicaid/CHIP dental program staff or consultants, state/territorial dental directors, county/city/local dental directors, community health center personnel, students, school-based and school-linked health center personnel, federally-employed dental personnel, as well as dental manufacturers/distributors and dental insurance companies – in short, anyone interested in engaging in collaboration to improve the oral health of the public. **Registration, hotel information for the Doubletree by Hilton at the Entrance to Universal Studios and the online downloadable schedule and program details are available [here](#).** Don't forget to download the meeting app.

Look for the next issue of *Roundup* in May 2023

Send any questions, comments, or articles to Bev Isman at bev.isman@comcast.net