

National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness



Dental Hygienist Liaison Project

Promoting oral health and preventing oral disease are essential to oral health and overall health. Because of the importance of oral health during pregnancy and early childhood, the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness (NCECHW), working in partnership with the American Dental Hygienists' Association, created the Dental Hygienist Liaison (DHL) project. Under the DHL project, one dental hygienist from each state volunteers to help promote oral health for pregnant women and children enrolled in Head Start and children enrolled in child care.

Role of the Dental Hygienist Liaison

DHLs promote oral health in Head Start and child care by

- Providing a communication link between NCECHW and Head Start and child care agencies in their states.
- Collaborating with state organizations such as oral health programs, Head Start state collaboration offices, and child care agencies.
- Providing oral health presentations at state conferences and meetings.
- Offering strategies to improve access to oral health care for pregnant women and children.
- Working with oral health professionals to establish partnerships with local Head Start and child care programs to provide staff education and training.
- Sharing information about the importance of oral health and regular oral health visits, good nutrition and oral hygiene practices, and oral-injury-prevention strategies with Head Start and child care program staff.
- Serving on Head Start committees (e.g., Head Start health manager networks, Head Start health services advisory committees) and oral health advisory boards and coalitions to promote the oral health of Head Start and child care participants.

To contact the DHL in your state, check the DHL roster at <https://www.astdd.org/docs/dhl-contact-list-by-state.pdf> or send a message to health@ecetta.info.



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES



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