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DHL Webinar

Exploring Innovative Ways to Connect
Families to Oral Health Care

Purpose

Continuing momentum from October's webinar: Building Confidence and Connections

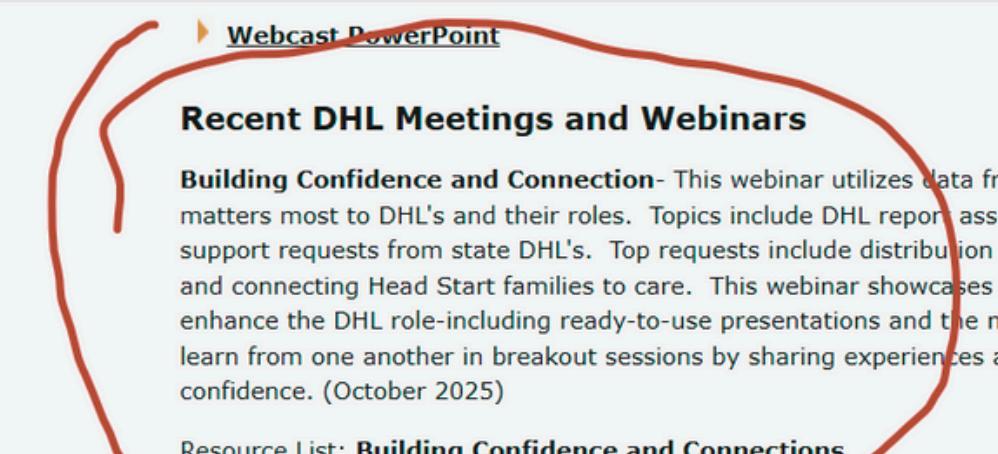


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Where oral health lives



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Webcast PowerPoint

Recent DHL Meetings and Webinars

Building Confidence and Connection- This webinar utilizes data from the DHL Assessment Report to unpack what matters most to DHL's and their roles. Topics include DHL report assessment findings with some of the top technical support requests from state DHL's. Top requests include distribution lists, increasing collaboration with stakeholders, and connecting Head Start families to care. This webinar showcases a tour of the DHL webpage, highlighting tools to enhance the DHL role-including ready-to-use presentations and the new ADHA Early Childhood webpage. Participants learn from one another in breakout sessions by sharing experiences and takeaways that boost presentation skills and confidence. (October 2025)

Resource List: [Building Confidence and Connections](#)

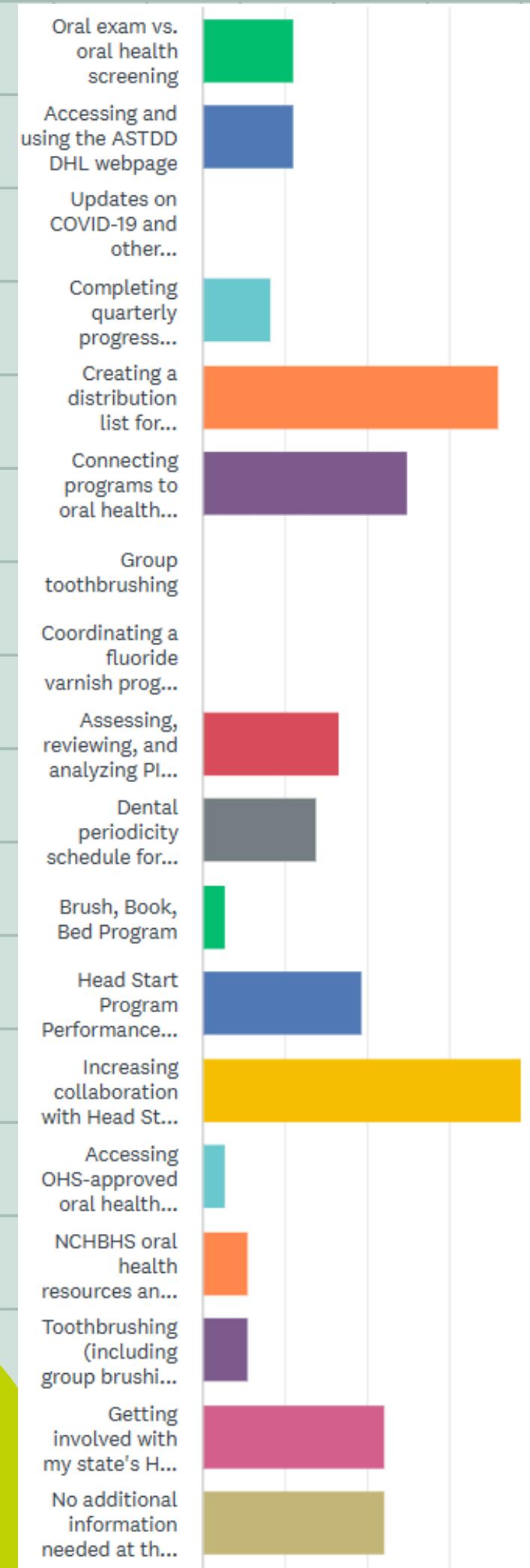
Webcast: [Building Confidence and Connection](#)

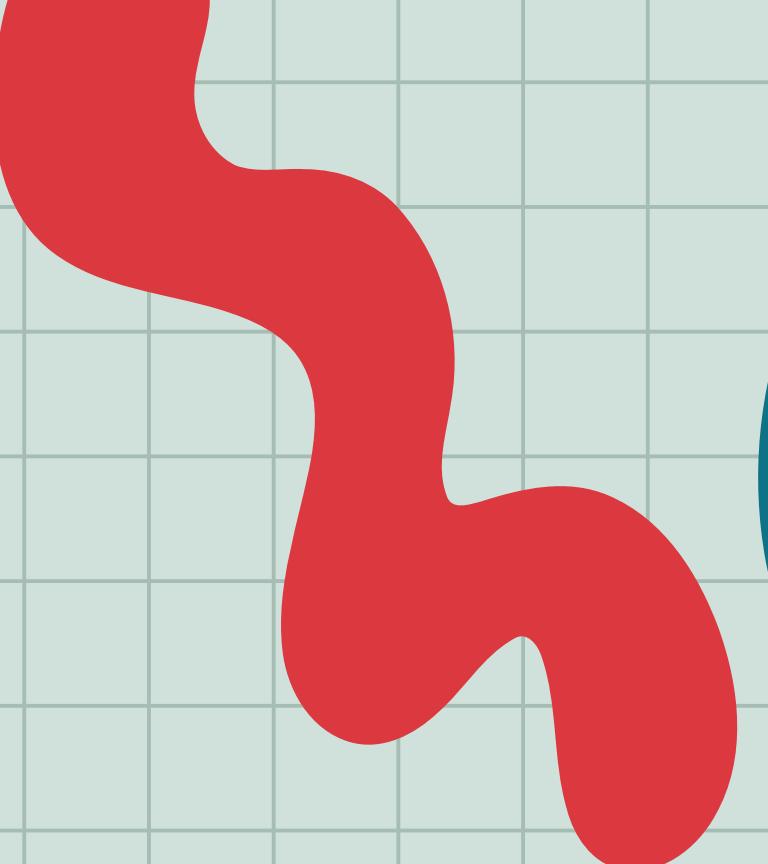
Framework for Supporting Oral Health for Children Enrolled in Head Start - In this webinar, Jenna Linden and Katy Battani explore how key policies-such as the Head Start Program Performance Standards, state dental periodicity schedules, and dental practice acts-shape oral health care for children in Head Start programs. They address important questions such as: What is the difference between an oral screening and an oral exam? Who can perform each procedure in your state-and what is the purpose of each during early childhood? Presenters highlight how the roles of oral health professionals vary by state and offer practical strategies to address common barriers to accessing care. Although this session was not recorded, the links below provide access to the key resources referenced in the presentation. (July 2025)

- [State Dental Periodicity Schedules](#)
- [A Guide to the Dental Periodicity Schedule and Oral Exam](#)
- [The Difference Between Oral Exams and Oral Health Screenings](#)
- [Variance in Dental Hygiene Scope of Practice by State](#)
- [Dental Practice Acts by State](#)
- [State Oral Health Programs](#)
- [State Dental Boards](#)

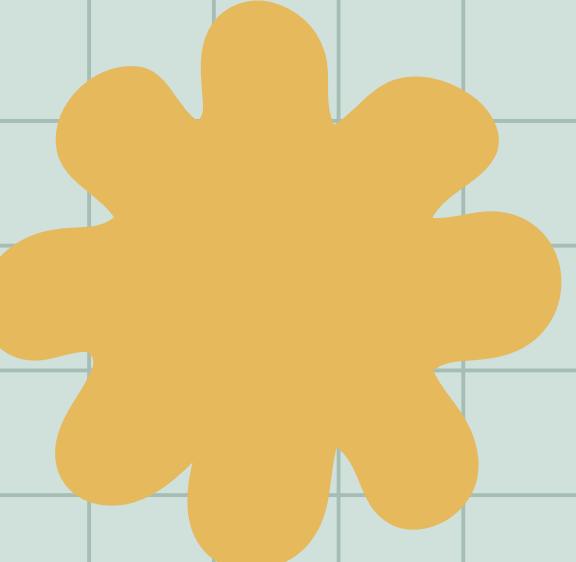
Q 5 DHL Annual Assessment

What content areas would you like more guidance on from your Regional DHL Coordinator (RDHLC) to increase confidence in your role as a DHL?





Learning Points



1

Identify state-level strategies to connect families to oral health care.

2

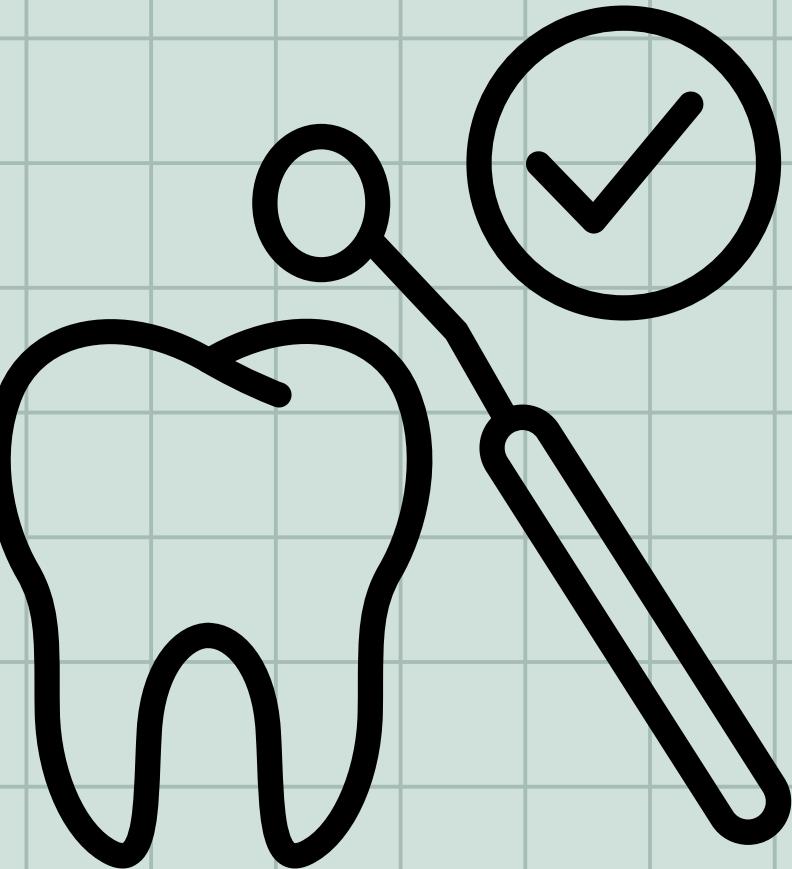
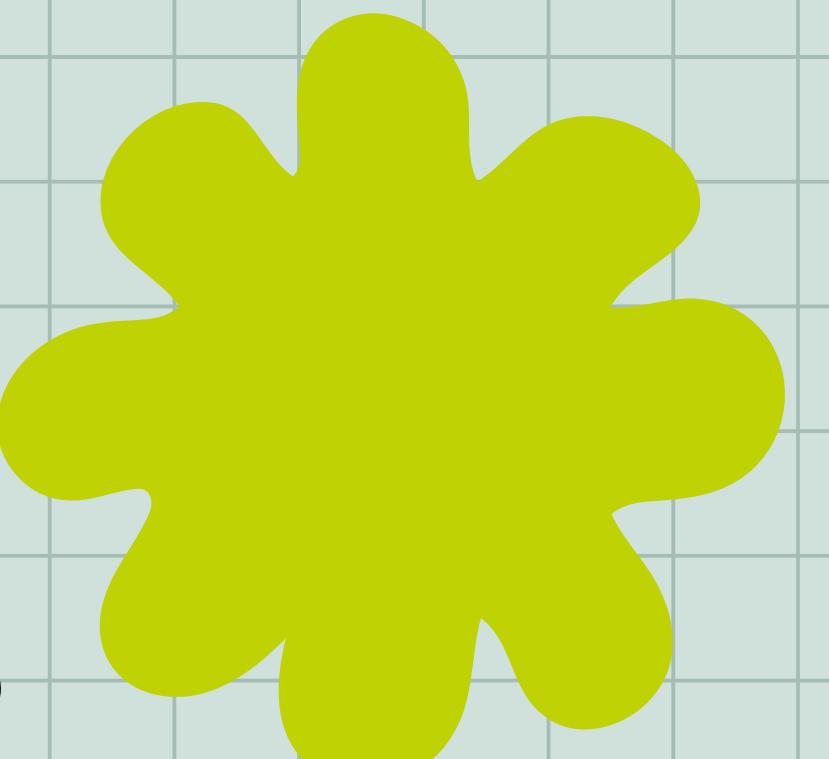
Explore state-level partnerships and existing resources to enhance access to oral health care in your role as a DHL.

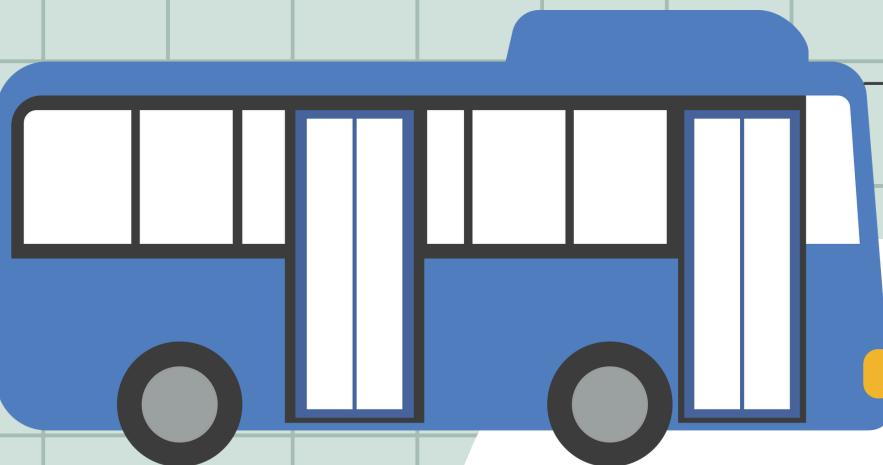
3

Apply ideas, lessons learned, and promising practices, shared by other DHLs, to help increase access to oral health care.

Icebreaker

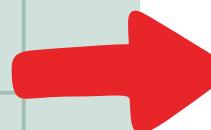
What best describes
your primary place of
employment as a RDH?





Snapshot

- Medicaid and CHIP provider networks
- Community health centers (FQHCs)
- Free and charitable dental clinics
- Mobile and school-based oral health programs
- State and local dental hygiene associations
- Dental schools/Dental hygiene programs
- State oral health coalitions
- State oral health programs
- Practical tools for families (e.g., scheduling, transportation, coverage guidance, oral hygiene supplies)



Other Ideas

What other potential sources of oral care or partners could be added to strengthen our list?





Brush Up on Oral Health

Following Up on Needed Oral Health Care

Most children in Head Start meet the requirement for having an oral exam within 90 days of beginning to attend a program. However, some children are not taken back to the dental office or clinic for needed follow-up care. A common reason parents do not seek treatment for tooth decay in primary teeth is that they are not permanent teeth.



This Brush Up on Oral Health tip sheet discusses the importance of treating tooth decay in primary teeth and offers tips for Head Start staff to encourage parents to get follow-up care for their child.

Treating Tooth Decay in Primary Teeth Is Important

Enamel, the hard white outer surface of a tooth, is thinner on primary teeth than it is on permanent teeth. Because of this, tooth decay in primary teeth can quickly turn into a large cavity. The cavity can get so deep that it spreads to the nerve of the tooth and causes a toothache or an abscess (infection). Also, tooth decay can spread from one tooth to another. This is important, because if tooth decay is not treated, the bacteria that cause tooth decay can spread to other teeth in a child's mouth.

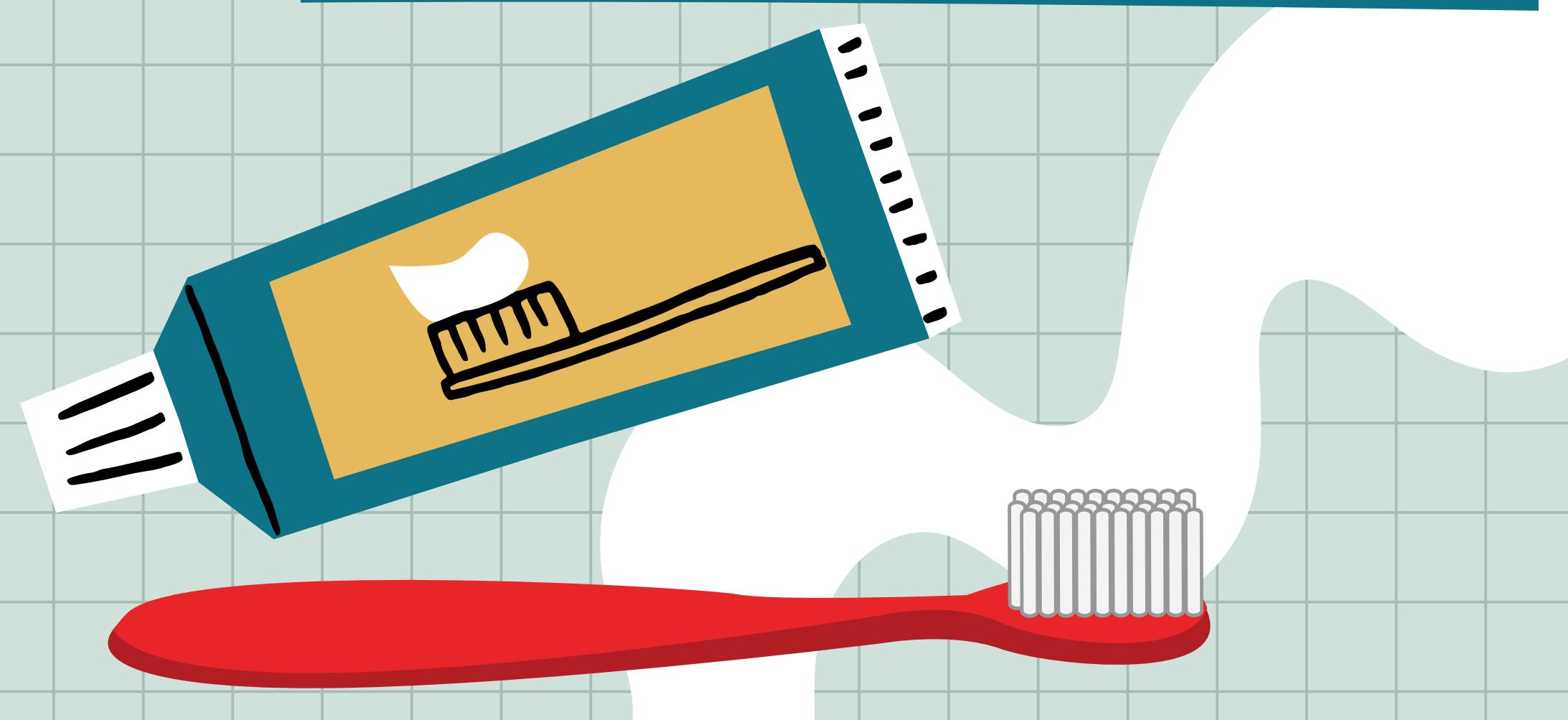
When children are about age 6, their front primary teeth fall out and are replaced by permanent teeth. Around this time, a set of top and bottom permanent molars come up behind the primary molars. These permanent molars do not push primary molars out. If untreated tooth decay is in the child's mouth, it can spread to the permanent molars and other permanent teeth as they come into the mouth.

If a child's tooth decay is not treated, the child can have pain, trouble sleeping, behavior problems, or difficulty concentrating. Tooth decay can also lead to more serious problems that are described in the tip sheet [Understanding Why Primary Teeth Are Important](#).

Tips for Head Start Staff to Encourage Parents to Take Children for Follow-up Oral Health Care

1. Find out why the child has not been taken for follow-up care. For example, some parents may not know about the importance of primary teeth. Other possible reasons for parents

Information to Share with Head Start Staff



Information for Head Start Staff to Share with Families



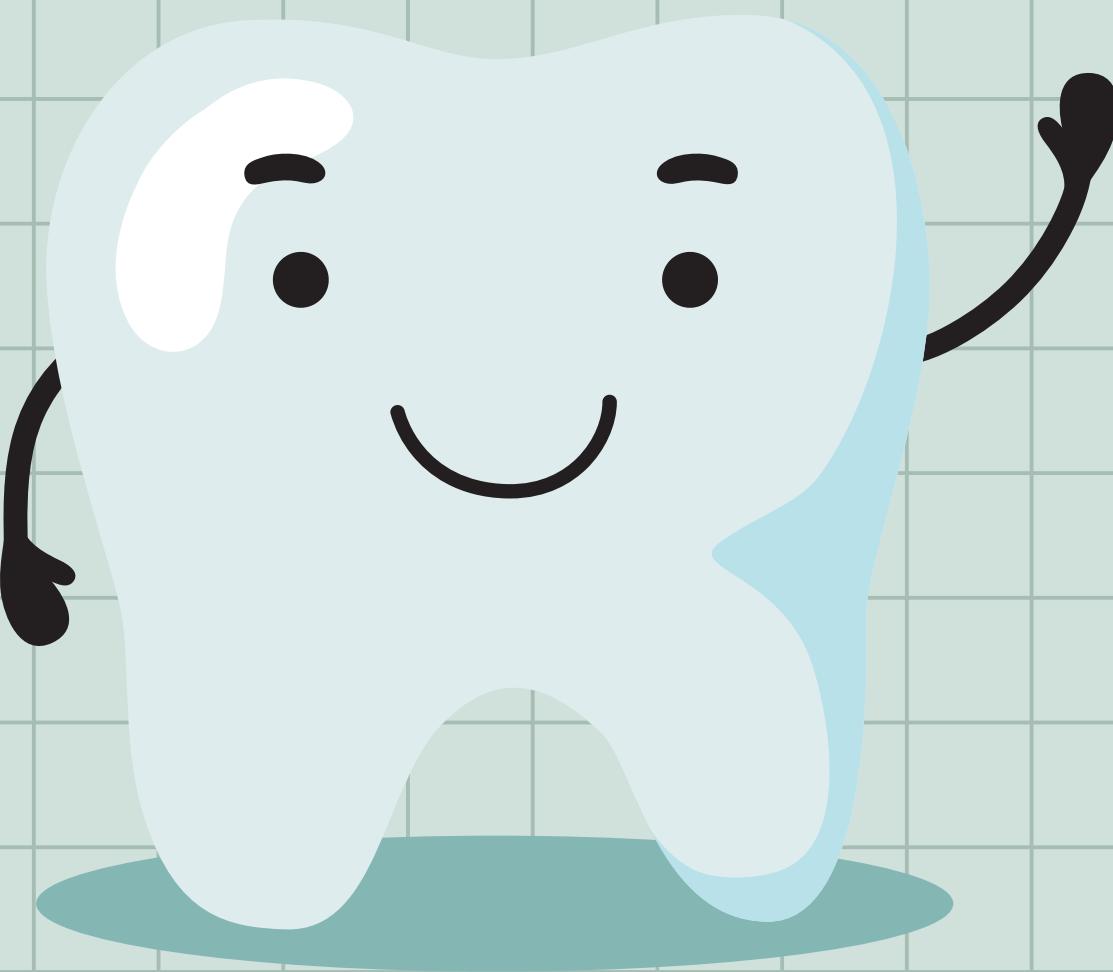
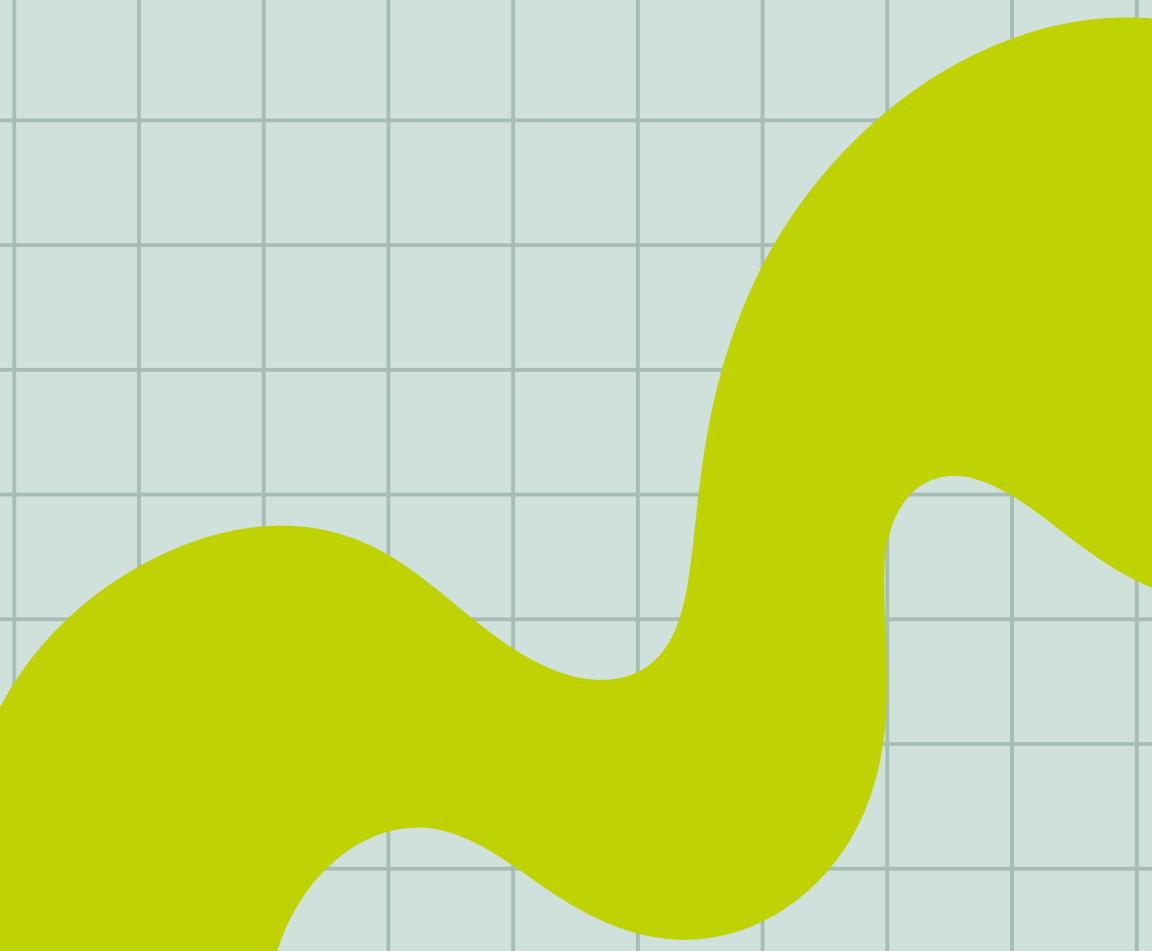
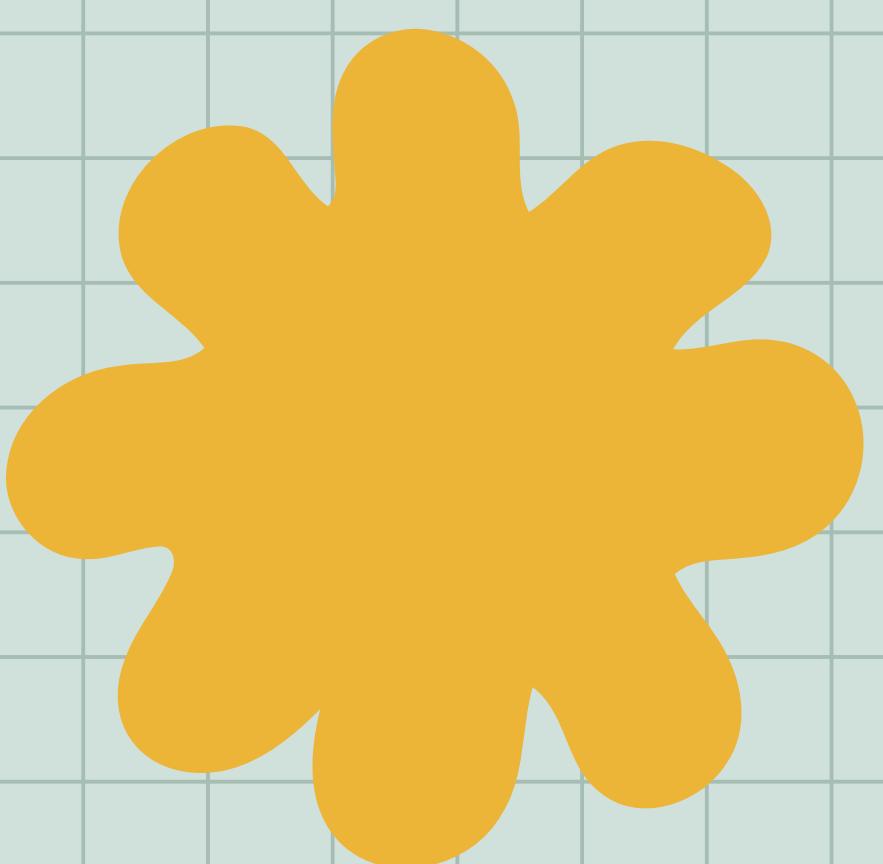
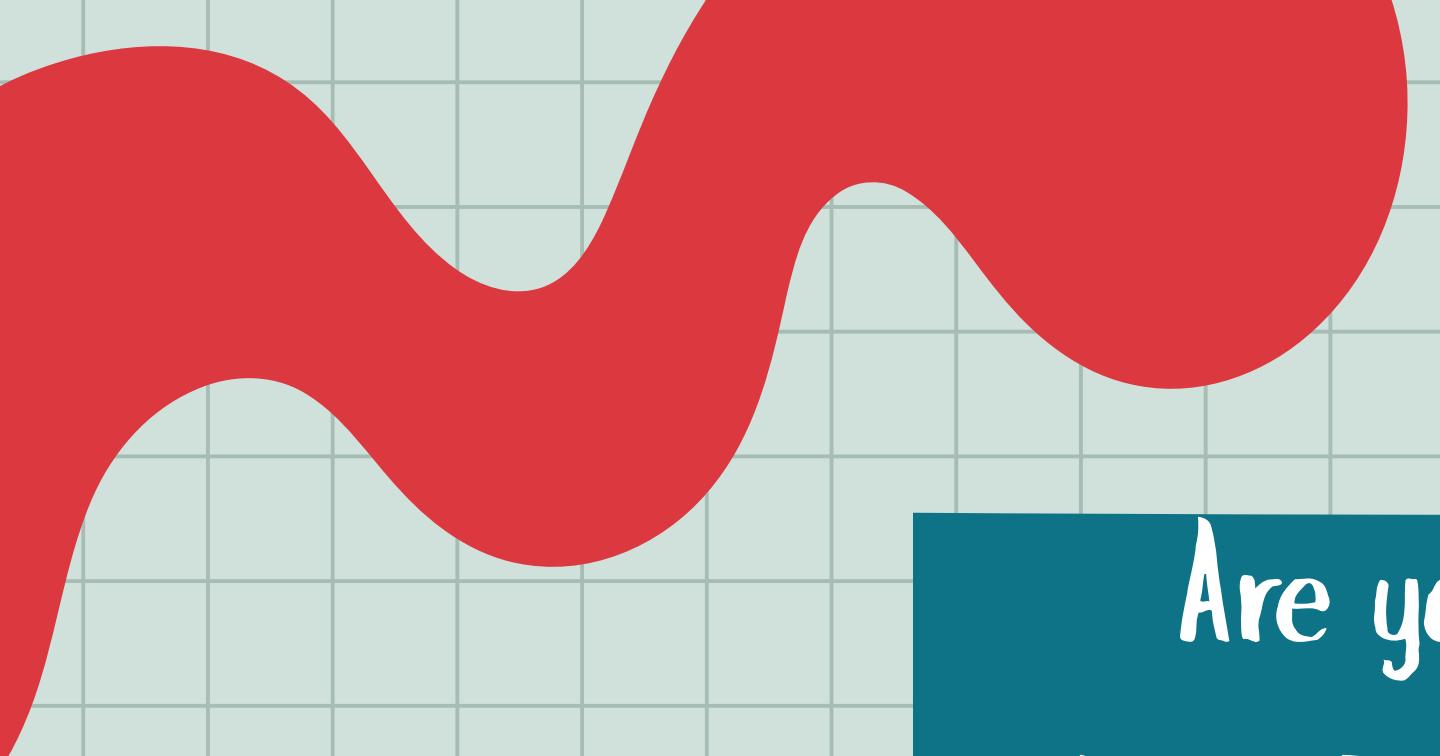
Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles



Visiting the Dental Clinic with Your Child

Children need to visit the dental clinic to keep their teeth and mouth healthy. If children have regular dental visits, the dentist and dental hygienist can take care of their teeth and find oral health problems early. Having regular dental visits also teaches children to value good oral health.





Are you aware we
have Regional Dental
Hygienist Liaison
Coordinators that
work to support the
needs of specific
populations?

Additional Oral Care Resources for Head Start Programs

- American Indian and Alaskan Native (AIAN) Head Start Program: Region XI
- Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) Program: Region XII



American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Head Start Program

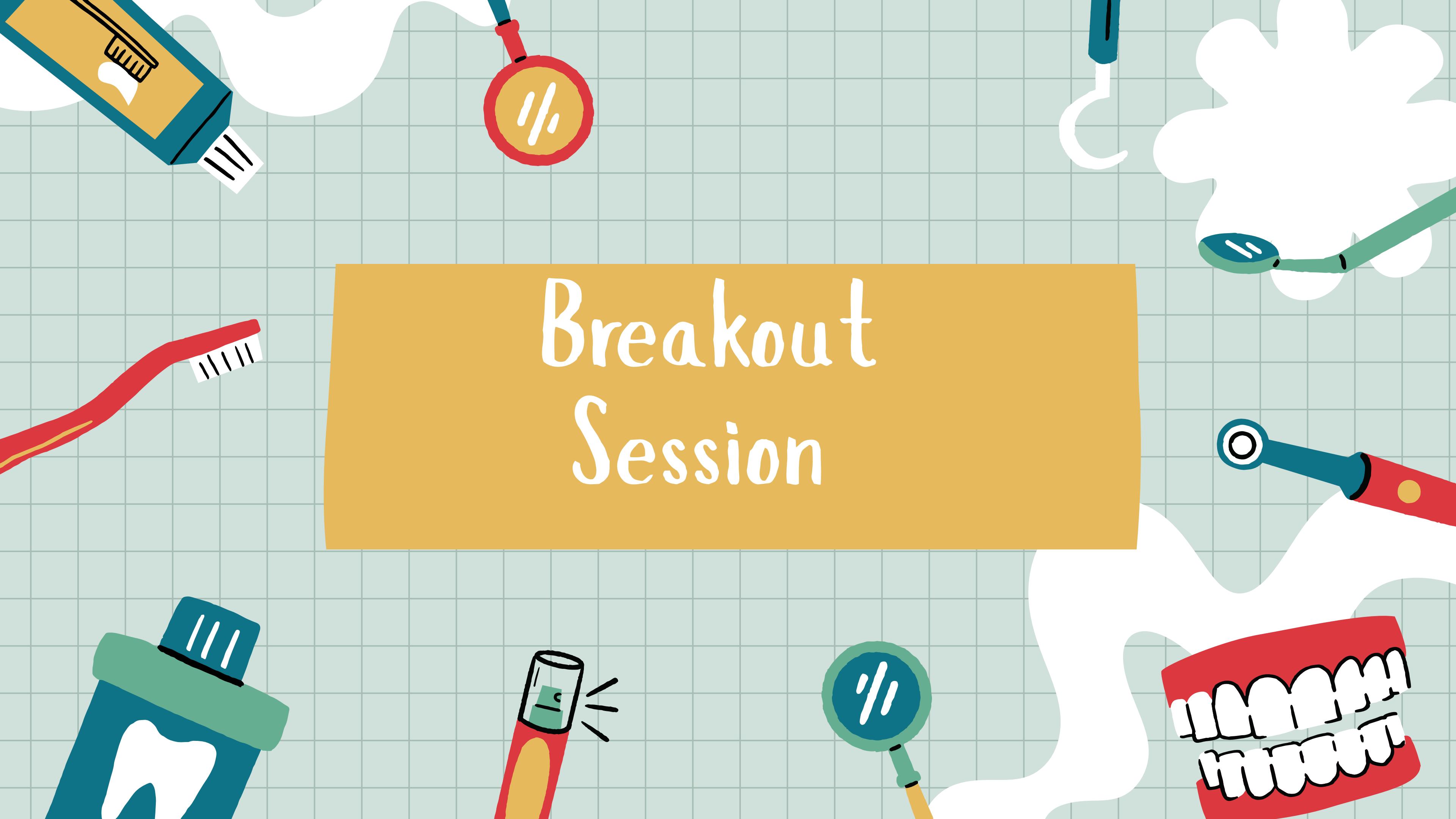


Alison Noble

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) Program

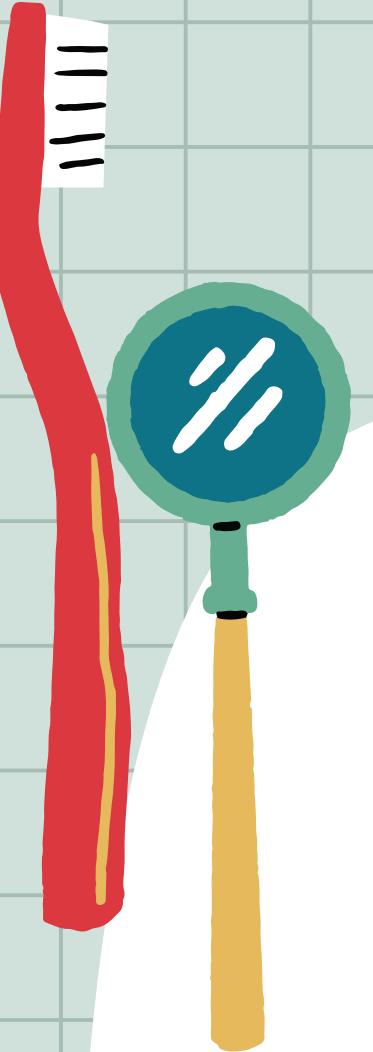


Carla Bassett *Interim



Breakout Session

Report Back



Resources

- School-based-or-school-linked-mobile-or-portable-dental-services-issue_brief PDF (www.astdd.org)
- <https://www.nnoha.org/pages-1/resources---access-to-care---mobile-dental-programs>
- <https://headstart.gov/oral-health/brush-oral-health/brush-oral-health>
- <https://headstart.gov/browse/series/healthy-habits-happy-smiles>

Webinar Evaluation



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y5NF>

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Thank You

