

# Dental Public Health Activity Descriptive Summary

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## Oral Health During Pregnancy and Early Childhood

In February 2009, the California Dental Association Foundation (CDA Foundation) and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists held the California Perinatal Oral Health Consensus Conference to develop practice guidelines to assist medical and dental professionals in providing appropriate evidence-based oral health care to perinatal populations. Upon completion of the guidelines, a dissemination process systemically shared the guidelines with healthcare professionals and community organizations involved in the care of pregnant women and young children. The dissemination of perinatal oral health guidelines to medical and dental team members is an important step in improving the oral health of pregnant women and creating a foundation for achieving optimal oral health in their children.

### Lessons Learned:

A project of this scope provides an environment where many lessons can be learned. Future endeavors could benefit from the experiences encountered during this project.

- Clearly define the roles of all stakeholders in the project (chairs, advisory committee, etc.). Initial definitions of the roles may change as the project takes shape – it would be prudent to periodically evaluate each party's role and agree to modify when necessary.
- Plan for unexpected delays in the project timeline. External review by parties outside of the project's advisory committee may prove to be advantageous and will provide insight that may have not been considered. A focus group process that involved the intended audience for the guidelines was a very valuable exercise that was not originally planned.
- Be sure to assemble a balanced team that includes academia and practice. This is a delicate balance to strike – the project must have the credibility of well-known researchers, and the practicality of a busy healthcare professionals.

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