

Dental Public Health Activity Descriptive Summary

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Alaska Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey

The Alaska Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey (CUBS) is a follow-up survey to the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) that was developed by the Alaska Division of Public Health, Section of Women's, Children's and Family Health, in 2006. After a pilot period in 2006 and 2007, CUBS has been ongoing since January 2008. CUBS' purpose is to fill a gap in knowledge by collecting information related to child behavior, health, health care access, and school readiness among Alaska's 3-year-olds. By using the methodology of re-interviewing mothers who completed a PRAMS survey, CUBS is also able to evaluate factors present at birth or early life that affect risk for later adverse childhood outcomes.

From its formation, CUBS has worked with numerous child health stakeholders, including the Alaska dental health officer, to determine data needs. As a result, every version of the CUBS survey has included multiple questions related to the child's dental health, including whether a health care provider has ever said the child had tooth decay or cavities, whether the child has ever been to see a dentist and at what age the child first saw a dentist, and what types of dental care the child has received. Data on associated risk factors, such as consumption of soda, juice, and sweetened drinks, is also collected. By linking back to the PRAMS survey, data analyses can also examine associations between maternal dental health during the pre-pregnancy, prenatal, and postpartum periods and health outcomes for the child at age three.

The PRAMS survey uses a stratified randomized sample to select about 1/6 of all births in the state. All women who respond to PRAMS are sent a CUBS survey when their child is three years old. Surveys are conducted by mail and phone. Women are not eligible for follow-up if they have moved out of Alaska since the child's birth. In 2015, 721 women were eligible for CUBS and 472 responded (65%). Data are weighted by year of child's birth to represent all children born in Alaska in that year. Supplies, postage, incentive and reward gifts, and statistical weighting for CUBS come to about \$18,000 annually funded through the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant. This does not include staff time for 1.5 FTEs who support the program.

CUBS data are available for a variety of health-related measures among young children in Alaska. The Alaska Oral Health program is using CUBS data to track success in encouraging parents to take their child in for a dental visit before age one.

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