



Dental Public Health Activities Descriptive Summaries

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New Jersey Preventive Oral Health Education Program

The New Jersey Preventive Oral Health Education Program, established in 1981, provides a variety of oral health education programs for children in grades K through 12. Programs are strategically located in the northern, central and southern parts of the state. The New Jersey Preventive Oral Health Education Program is administered by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and is regionally implemented by the Oral Health Coordinators. Each region has an Oral Health Coordinator and at least one other staff person to implement program activities; the Coordinators and other professional staff are registered dental hygienists. The program collaborates with community-based agencies, local health departments, WIC Programs and state and local education agencies. Program's educational activities are age-appropriate and cover a variety of oral health issues including but not limited to: oral hygiene, fluoride, dental sealants, nutrition, periodontal disease, and the prevention of oral trauma. Classroom presentations include discussion, a variety of audio-visual materials, and extensive student participation. Health fair exhibits address areas of oral health appropriate for the participants. Puppet shows are used to teach the importance of proper oral hygiene, fluoride, a healthy diet and regular dental visits. All Preventive Oral Health Education Program activities can be adapted for a "special needs" audience. The Preventive Oral Health Education Program also provides in-service or workshop programs to non-dental professionals, including school nurses, public health nurses, teachers, and social workers. Data on regional program activities is compiled on a quarterly basis and submitted to the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS). The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) provides funds to three regional agencies to implement the Preventive Oral Health Education Program. These agencies include a federally-qualified health center, a local health department, and a maternal child health consortium. The annual budget for the three regional programs is approximately \$430,000. Costs covered include the salaries of the Regional Oral Health Coordinators, other dental hygienists, program support staff, travel expenses, training, program supplies and educational materials. During the 2000-2001 school year, over 23,000 students participated in formal oral health education programs provided by the Regional Oral Health Coordinators and their staff.

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