



Dental Public Health Activities Descriptive Summaries

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Adopt a Pre-K

Adopt a Pre-K is a program developed and facilitated by the northern region program site of the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) Preventive Oral Health Education Program. The program pairs dentists with Pre-Kindergarten classrooms of public schools and independent daycare centers in their community. The goal of Adopt a Pre-K is to establish a relationship between local dentists, pre-Kindergarten children and their families. Local dentists who volunteer to participate in this program visit the classrooms, talk to the children, parents and teachers about oral health, and perform a visual dental screening for the children after parental/guardian consent is obtained. The dentists are from the local community and their dental offices are accessible to the families. The individual school or child care center works directly with the identified dentist(s) to arrange screenings, education or other activities. At times, the dentist hosts a "dental office" field trip. School nurses, social workers, or daycare workers provide follow-up for the children who require treatment after the dental screenings. For the program, materials are less than \$1 per child. Dentist time is in-kind contribution. During the 2000-2001 school year, Adopt a Pre-K paired 18 dentists with 123 classrooms in schools and childcare facilities. The dentists spoke to the children about healthy teeth and visiting the dental office, and they conducted a visual screening on 2,214 children with signed parental/guardian consent. For the children in the Adopt a Pre-K program, over 90% in need of treatment receive it.

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