

Dental Public Health Activity Descriptive Summary

Practice Number: 33030
Submitted By: New Jersey Department of Health, Children's Oral Health Education Program
Submission Date: May 2017
Last Reviewed: May 2017
Last Updated: May 2017

New Jersey Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program "Be a Smart Mouth" Home Visiting and Oral Health: Perfect Together Oral Health Training Program

Recognizing the importance of good oral health practices for pregnant women and first-time families, the New Jersey Department of Health Children's Oral Health Education Program in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families developed and implemented the "Be a Smart Mouth" Home Visiting and Oral Health: Perfect Together training program. "Be a Smart Mouth" is an interdisciplinary oral health training program with the overall goal of reducing early childhood caries. The training program includes an interactive education component, professional resources for Home Visitor staff, family education materials and personal care resources for distribution to families enrolled in the Nurse-Family Partnership, Healthy Families and Parents as Teachers home visiting model programs.

Goals

"Be a Smart Mouth" Home Visiting and Oral Health: Perfect Together

1. Train a multi-disciplinary home visitor staff to educate pregnant women, first time moms and families about the importance of good oral health practices, healthy food choices, tobacco cessation, importance of regular dental visits and establishment of a dental home.
2. Reinforce the importance of the child's first dental visit by age 1.
3. Increase access to clinical dental services for pregnant women and children through referral to the New Jersey Statewide network of Federally Qualified Health Centers.
4. Reduce the incidence of early childhood caries.
5. Emphasize the importance of oral health literacy.

"Be a Smart Mouth" 2014 Training

The Program was implemented in 2014 with 3 regional trainings conducted to target the north, central and south regions of the State. Staff from the Nurse Family Partnership, Healthy Families and Parents as Teachers participated. For the initial year, 192 home visitor staff participated in the "Be a Smart Mouth" training. For the initial training sessions, each home visitor participant received the "Home Visitor Oral Health Bag" which contained a training binder of oral health education materials, that included: "Healthy Smile for Your Child" English and Spanish, "Your Child's Oral Health is Important, Especially During Pregnancy," "Oral Health Recommendation Fact Sheet for Health Care Professionals," "Pediatric Oral Health Risk Assessment and Guidance," variety of pediatric oral health guides and resources such as the "NJ Dental Clinic Directory" and "NJ Smiles" that home visitor staff would use to assist families to secure a dental home.

Additional education materials targeting tobacco cessation and limitation of sugar consumption was included. Training participants also received a pen, paper and water bottle with an oral health focused message.

The training focus for 2014 was good oral health and hygiene. Since home visitor staff were not dental health professionals, the materials distributed and the training sessions conducted were targeted to non-dental professionals.

Approximate cost for "Home Visitor Oral Health Training" bag was \$ 26.00/bag.

Each family enrolled in the NJ Home Visiting Program received a "Family Oral Health Care" bag. The bag distributed to families included: 2 adult toothbrushes, 2 child size brushes, infant brush, tooth tender, adult floss, child flossers, 2-minute timer, sippy cup, xylitol gum, leaflets including, "Healthy Smiles for Your Young Child," "Tooth Fairy and 2min2x.org," and "Oral Health is Important/Pregnancy."

The approximate cost of the "Family Oral Health Care" bag was \$ 6.00

The home visitor staff bags and the family care bags were assembled by an outside agency that also stored the materials until training sessions took place.

"Be a Smart Mouth" 2015 Training

During the 2015 grant year, a "Be a Smart Mouth" refresher training took place in addition to a regular training session. A total of 50 home visitor staff participated. For the year II training sessions, home visitor staff received an "Oral Health Training Portfolio" that included: "Bright Futures Pocket Guide, information for the NJ Dental Clinic Directory to assist staff in securing a dental home for families, "Drink Pyramid Magnet," writing pad, and additional print oral health resources.

The approximate cost was \$2.60/portfolio. (This is a reduced cost since many materials were previously purchased.)

"Family Oral Health Care" bags were provided for distribution to newly enrolled families. The cost remained the same as the initial project year. The same resources were provided.

The home visitor staff bags and the family care bags were again assembled by an outside agency. The agency stored the materials until training sessions took place and shipped them to the training location.

"Be a Smart Mouth" 2016 Training

During year 3 of the "Be a Smart Mouth" Initiative, the training initiatives focused on "Oral Health and Oral Health Literacy." Three regional trainings took place with 128 home visitor staff participating.

Participants received the "Oral Health Training Portfolio." Materials for year III included: pad and pen, "Bright Futures Pocket Guide, "American Academy of Pediatrics Brush/Book/Bed Poster," "Oral Health self-management goal sheet," "American Academy of Pediatrics Clinical Finding Handout," information for NJ Dental Clinic Directory to assist families to secure a dental home.

The approximate cost was \$3.00/portfolio.

"Family Oral Health Care" bags were also distributed. The bag included the same materials as provided during year II; however, in efforts to enhance oral health literacy, and encourage a routine of bedtime tooth brushing along with reading a story to the child, a copy of the "Bernstein Bears Visit the Dentist" was included.

Approximate cost of the "Family Oral Health Care" bag was \$10.00

The home visitor staff bags and family care bags were assembled by an outside agency. The agency stored the materials until training sessions took place and shipped them to the training location.

"Be a Smart Mouth" Trainings

Since inception, each training program included a power point presentation with content including: good oral health and hygiene practices, healthy food choice selection, reduction of sugary beverage consumption, importance of drinking water, early childhood caries, importance of regular dental check-ups and the resources to assist families to secure a dental home. Participants also watched the video, "Healthy Mouths For Your and Your Baby" video. (University of Michigan)

Trainings included distribution of the "Home Visitor Oral Health Training Bag," to all first-time participants, question and answer session and the distribution of "Family Oral Health Care" bags. Participants received approximately 25 bags for family distribution. Beginning with trainings in Year II, participants began dialogue about the experience of engaging families about the importance of good oral health practices. They shared family comments and tips to enhance the oral health component of the home visit.

For each training, home visitor participants completed a pre-and post-test survey to determine oral health knowledge. For the 2017 trainings, home visitor participants will complete a survey that addresses: barriers for families that do not have a dental home, self-reporting missing work or school due to dental emergencies, use of the NJ Dental Clinic Directory, "Dial a Smile" to assist families to secure a dental home, prevalence of emergency room visits for dental care and dental health insurance. Data obtained will determine topic areas for future trainings.

Families Reached Through the "Be a Smart Mouth" Initiative

For the period of 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, approximately 6,000 family care bags were distributed to enrolled families Statewide while 4,940 bags were distributed during the 2016-2017 training period.

The "Be a Smart Mouth" Home Visiting and Oral Health Perfect Together part of the New Jersey Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, was selected for poster presentation at the 2016 Association of Maternal Child Health Programs Annual Conference.

In addition, because of the success of "Be a Smart Mouth" Oral Health and Home Visiting: Perfect Together, the initiative was highlighted for federal partners and reviewers at the New Jersey Federal Block Grant Meeting held in August, 2015.

Lessons Learned:

Comprehensive planning and development, prudent purchasing practices and collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families enabled the implementation of a successful initiative to address the oral health needs of first-time families State-wide.

The "Be a Smart Mouth" oral health training program trained a multi-disciplinary non-dental health professional staff about a variety of oral health issues and provided them with tools and resources to assist families to improve their oral health status and secure a dental home if needed.

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