



Dental Public Health Activities Descriptive Summaries

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Oral Health and Treatment Assessment Survey

The New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Dental Health has developed a survey, Oral Health and Treatment Assessment Survey (OHTA), to obtain baseline data and to monitor the oral health status and treatment needs of school children in New York State. For Phase I in 1981, baseline data were obtained from participants in 103 schools from different socioeconomic levels and Health Services Areas (health planning and development regions of the state). Phase II of the survey was conducted in 1984-85, and data collected from 84 schools provided information on changes over time as well as for evaluation of existing dental health programs. Phase III was conducted during 1987-88. The Maternal and Child Health Block Grant funded each phase of the survey: \$10,000 for dental examiners and recorders, and \$5,000-\$10,000 for examination supplies, instruments and portable dental equipment. Dentists served as examiners and assessed the number of decayed, missing and filled teeth and surfaces using the DMFT, DMFS, df and dfs indices, the periodontal condition using the Dental Health Center Index and the oral hygiene status using the Simplified Oral Hygiene Index. In addition, data estimating treatment needs and service utilization for New York State children were collected. The recorders entered data gathered from clinic examinations directly onto a laptop computer in the field. An approximate sample of 2,500 children aged 6-18 years (in grades 2, 5, 8 and 11) participated in the survey during each phase. The OHTA allowed tracking of the progress made by New York State towards improving oral health, advances towards achieving Healthy People oral health objectives, and trends in the prevalence of oral disease and the dental needs of children in New York State. An analysis of the data collected in Phase III showed that children examined had fewer decayed, missing and filled teeth surfaces than those examined in Phase I. Further, the survey findings have guided the Bureau of Dental Health in targeting areas and populations for program services and helped stakeholders obtain funding for services. The experience of repeating the survey has also provided the ground work in setting up an oral health surveillance system for the state under the oral health initiative funded by the CDC infrastructure grant in 2001.

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