

## **Dental Public Health Activity Descriptive Summary**

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**Practice Number:** 50005  
**Submitted By:** Oral Health Program, Utah Department of Health  
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### **Oral Health Education for Pregnant Women and New Moms**

The 2008 Utah Pregnancy Risk Assessment Survey (PRAMS) showed that 34% of Pregnant Hispanic woman surveyed had NEVER been to a dentist in their lifetime. Studies have indicated that women with untreated periodontal disease or oral infections are at a greater risk of preterm birth. This is an essential oral health issue to address. In August 2011, we developed and presented an educational tool in the form of a power point titled, "Oral Health Education for Pregnant Women and New Moms". This presentation went to WIC, local health departments (LHD), community health centers (CHC), all Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) staff throughout the state, and other safety net organizations that address health disparities. Along with this training, our program taught fluoride varnish application.

The UDOH Oral Health Program collaborated and continues to collaborate with programs such as WIC, Head Start and other minority groups. Special attention was paid to simplify health literacy terms. The power point is now on the UDOH Oral Health and WIC websites in Spanish and English for the general public. There is also another training version for WIC employees. The simplified version is being shared with mothers of Head Start children throughout the state of Utah, using Dental Home Initiative (DHI) federal funds from Head Start. Other minority groups are also receiving this same information. Michelle Martin, a dental hygienist and Oral Health Specialist for the UDOH will be giving these presentations. Currently, As of June 27, 2012 over 828 HS/EHS staff have received this training along with fluoride varnish application training. Hundreds of Utah LHD's, WIC and CHC staff as well as other safety net organization staff have also participated.

A dental hygienist with the UDOH, Oral Health Program will be presenting the educational PowerPoint®. Head Start funds will help pay for travel and material expenses for presentations at twelve Head Start divisions. Posting on the UDOH/WIC and Oral Health website was free of charge. Federal funds from Head Start will help in paying for travel and material expenses to 12 different Head Start divisions

We feel confident that we achieved the goal of this educational tool; to increase the perceived need for dental visits for pregnant woman and for their children. Also, to empower mothers to practice better oral health care and nutrition practices. In conjunction with this educational launch and working with WIC and Head Start we trained staff to administer fluoride varnish under the direction of a health professional. A pre/post test was created and administered to all HS/EHS staff. This was given before and after each presentation. The average pre-test score was 74% and the average post-test score was 98%. From this needs assessment, goals will be reevaluated and further emphasis will be made where necessary. We were informed in May of 2012 that funding for the HS/EHS project would no longer be available. We are happy that we were able to make so many connections this year with many safety nets and plan on keeping these established partnerships.

**Lessons Learned:**

We felt the Utah DHI was very successful. A total of 828 Head Start/EHS staff received fluoride varnish application training and participated in a presentation on oral health care for pregnant women and new moms from November 2011 to April 2012. Among these, our program visited two Indian HS and two Migrant HS. At each visit we gave out toothbrushes, fluoride varnish and educational materials. We learned we needed to rewrite a question from our PRE/POST test that was not clear. We adjusted the question half way through the visits.

When many safety nets are working together and collaborating for children's health a great sense of community involvement happens. We were excited to work with LHD's, WIC chapters, CHC's, and other local safety net organizations in each area.

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