

Dental Public Health Activity Descriptive Summary

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Tooth Tutor: A simplified oral health curriculum for Pre-K to grade 12. 3rd ed.

1. Dental caries are still very prevalence among WA children. Little change has occurred in caries experience in the last 10 years. In order to outreach more children and families, we offer the Tooth Tutor as a simplified oral health curriculum for public schools preK-12. This curriculum follows the national standards for early learning and schools, which helps teachers in achieving their own performance expectations.
2. Tooth Tutor is a collaborative effort between the WA State Oral Health Program and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. The intent is to bring evidence-based information to the classroom to promote oral health and enhance learning in a way that is user friendly to teachers and school nurses. Tooth Tutor talks about simple effective measures that can be applied at home and school. The ultimate goal is to help students and their families learn how to maintain a healthy mouth and prevent dental disease, leading to healthier and happier children and consequently more productive at school.
3. The Tooth Tutor curriculum is online and free to download.
<http://here.doh.wa.gov/materials/tooth-tutor/>
4. This curriculum provides easy access to educational materials on oral health. Tooth Tutor is user-friendly with the non-traditional teacher in mind. Lessons are easy to understand. Materials needed and supplemental resources are listed to support a successful teaching experience. Unit topics are generally interchangeable between grades. Units and class related activities are adaptable to all student levels.

Lessons Learned:

1. Part of this success is that there only ten main messages that can be taught in different ways to different grades (from pre-K to 12th grade). Also each lesson is linked to a national performance measurement that teachers are required to report on, which makes teacher's lives easier.
2. Having an evaluation component for each lesson is also required by many schools, so teachers are happy to see that included in Tooth Tutor. The evaluation piece is simplified based on advice from schools and epidemiologists.
3. Tooth Tutor has been well received by schools and is being used by university dental students working with children in community settings.
4. Working collaboratively with other agencies took more time than initially planned.
5. It is important to follow up with training on these materials through school conferences or webinars for teachers and school nurses.

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