



Leading Change for
Oral Health in
Pennsylvania

**2019-20 Mini Grant Program
Summary Report
August 31, 2020**

In September 2019, the Pennsylvania Coalition for Oral Health announced recipients of the 2019-20 PA Oral Health Mini-Grant Program. The goal of the program is to facilitate the implementation of the goals and recommendations of the 2017-2020 PA Oral Health Plan. Following is a summary of the initiatives that were funded by the grants.

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Public Citizens for Children and Youth (PCCY)

*Give Kids a Smile: Increasing Children’s Access to Care & Coverage
Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties*

PCCY received funding to recruit 26 dental practices across the Delaware Valley to produce *Give Kids a Smile*, providing approximately 750 uninsured or under-insured kids in Philadelphia, Delaware, Montgomery, Chester, and Bucks counties desperately needed dental exams and cleanings. When families call in to make appointments with participating dentists, PCCY signs them up for public health insurance, increasing their access to year-round dental care. This also increases the chance that participating children return to the office where they receive services and make that office their dental home.



PCCY designed and printed 10,000 flyers translated into 12 languages (Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Indonesian, Khmer, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese); distributed materials via mail to school nurses and online through Facebook and Twitter; and through weekly eblasts to 17,000+ subscribers. The call center was staffed with 97 volunteers and was set to

open on March 23, 2020 to make 750 appointments, and volunteers were also in place to distribute flyers in various neighborhoods in Philadelphia and Upper Darby on five different days in late March and early April.

When the COVID-19 health emergency struck, schools were closed, followed by non-essential businesses including non-emergency dental practices. PCCY was forced to cancel the event for the foreseeable future. When PCCY called dentists to confirm they were cancelling the event, they asked them to consider it a postponement because PCCY intends to reschedule—and the dentists concurred.

Healthy Teeth Healthy Children Program (HTHC)

Pennsylvania Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Oral Health Literacy Education Expansion to Local Health Departments

Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Cumberland, Erie, Lehigh, Northampton, Philadelphia, and York Counties

The purpose of this grant was to further expand the reach of the successful HTHC Oral Health Story Kit project by providing ten county and municipal health departments in Pennsylvania with these proven resources to use within their communities to educate parents and families on the importance of oral health to overall health and provide guidance on adopting good oral health habits. Additionally, grant funds supported the creation of additional story kits and other educational oral health resources to distribute to community-based agencies as requested.



The COVID-19 public health crisis affected the timeline for this work, delaying Oral Health Story Kit delivery until late June 2020. At time of reporting, six of ten local health departments had confirmed interest in receipt of the materials and a total of eight kits were mailed. Efforts to provide these resources to the unresponsive remaining agencies will continue in Summer 2020. Ultimately, the goal of distributing educational resources to county and municipal health departments was or will be met.

Additionally, funds from this project allowed HTHC to respond and supply educational oral health materials to community partners as requested throughout the grant window. These requests included an additional three Oral Health Story Kits and 65 prenatal care bags.

This project supported the distribution of eight Oral Health Story Kits to six county and municipal health departments as follows:

- Allegheny County Health Department (1)
- Allentown City Bureau of Health (1)
- Bucks County Department of Health (2)
- Erie County Department of Health (1)
- Philadelphia Department of Public Health (2)
- York City Bureau of Health (1)



Additionally, HTHC responded to Oral Health Story Kit requests from three community-based agencies, providing one free kit to each of the following:

- Dental Health Program at the Chester County Health Department
- The Children’s Garden - Shiremanstown
- Family Connections of Easton, Inc.

Lastly, grant funds supported the distribution of prenatal care bags to the Marvine Family Center-Parents As Teachers Program in Bethlehem (40) and Reading Hospital’s Community Wellness Program (25).

HTHC EPIC Training Program
Statewide

The purpose of this grant was to support oral health educational training for primary care medical providers through the Healthy Teeth Healthy Children (HTHC) EPIC (Educating Physicians in the Community) trainings between August-September 2019. The overarching goal of the HTHC EPIC training program is to improve completion of oral health preventive care and dental treatment plans for children and families across Pennsylvania by improving medical care provider knowledge and increasing medical-dental integration (increasing referrals). The program supported material costs (including trainer resources and honoraria, participants materials, and associated printing and postage fees), and HTHC staff time associated with promotion, coordination and evaluation of HTHC live and online training offerings and technical support services for trained medical practices. Funding was leveraged with a variety of other sources to support the overall provider educational campaign for 2019.

In August-September 2019, HTHC provided 4 in-person trainings and 1 webinar training for primary care provider practices, reaching 52 allied health professionals in our efforts to expand the oral health network across the Commonwealth and facilitate the integration of oral health into overall health.

Penn State Health
Pediatric Dental Health
Cumberland, Dauphin, and Lancaster Counties

Penn State Health's original aim was to increase the percentage of children cared for by primary care pediatricians at their four outpatient sites who establish a dental home by 12 months of age from 9% to 15% by Dec 31, 2020; who establish a dental home by 24 months of age from 30% to 45%; who brush their teeth with fluoride toothpaste at 12 months of age from 30% to 45%; who brush their teeth with fluoride toothpaste at 24 months of age from 55% to 75%. We also had an aim to improve our fluoride varnish application rate in children ages 6 months to 5 years from 25% to 40% by December 31, 2020.

They began distributing dentist lists at the 9- and 18-month well child visits in March 2019. Data interpreted from July through November 2019 showed that distribution of the lists did not make a significant change in the percent of 12- and 24-month old children seeing a dentist or brushing with fluoride toothpaste. Beginning in December 2019, they began distribution of toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste at the 9- and 18-month well child visits at one outpatient site (Hope Dr). This was a pilot funded by the pediatric department while awaiting IRB approval for grant funds. Unfortunately, data collection and clinic schedules were disrupted due to COVID-19.

Penn State Health has made purchases via the grant and plans on beginning distribution of toothbrushes, toothpaste, and books in June 2020 as originally reported upon grant submission. They will continue aggregating data monthly and interpret using statistical process control charts.

While the chosen outcome measures do not yet show improvement, there are several positive changes that have occurred as a direct result of this grant. These changes include an increase in provider and patient awareness of early preventive oral health behaviors, and confidence of this project within administration to allow pilot funding while awaiting grant funds.

In 2019, Penn State Health distributed 733 oral health surveys, capturing 50% of all well child visits at 12- and 24-month old children at two outpatient sites. They anticipate that this project will have similar reach within their patient population.

Since distribution of the oral health survey at the 12- and 24-month well child visit can be considered an intervention, they plan to distribute the oral health-themed book at the 15-month well child visit instead of the 12-month visit.

Family First Health

Dental Workforce Development

Adams, Lancaster, and York Counties

The original goals/objectives for this project related to dental workforce development. Family First Health (FFH) proposed producing videos to support the talent recruitment to bring new staff on board, and to provide outreach to local schools that prepare students in the dental field. They also wanted the video to showcase our program and site for greater understanding of who they are and what they do. FFH was able to meet these goals.

FFH completed the video and are starting to publish it to various platforms where it will reach the intended audiences; they have not been able to collect this kind of data yet. They are going to be using it on social media, including Facebook and LinkedIn, and on recruiting platforms. Additionally, it will be featured on FFH's website in the human resources/careers section. FFH is also planning to push it out to local educational programs that train students for careers that they seek to hire, including dental assistants, which have been difficult to recruit lately.

FFH planned to create both recruitment and training videos with this project. As they got into the project, they spent a great deal more time with the recruitment video than expected, and were able to produce a longer, more comprehensive result than initially planned. This video is also adaptable to use in shorter segments on social media and be tailored to specific focus points.

One of the challenges of this project was the timing that was initially planned; COVID-19 hit as FFH was going to start filming. With the effects of COVID-19 on the dental practice, their efforts were completely put on hold for longer than expected, as staff were not available or onsite to assist with this project. After that longer-than-expected delay, FFH was able to complete the video this summer.