

## **PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM SURVEY- Other PH Prevention**

### **Contact Information**

Jill Fernandez, MPH, RDH, Director of Pediatric Outreach Programs  
New York University College of Dentistry  
Phone: 212-998-9247 Fax: 212-995-4364  
jbf2@nyu.edu  
345 E. 24<sup>th</sup> Street, 9W New York, NY 10010

**Short Title:** Public-Private Collaboration: A comprehensive oral health program for Head Start children

**Program Location:** New York City, all five boroughs

### **Objectives and Goals:**

Dental caries continues to be the number-one chronic disease affecting children, starting at very early ages. The vast majority of dental caries is present in low-income children, who have limited access to treatment and care. To address this, we aimed to:

1. Create a public/private collaboration to facilitate oral health care for Head Start children in New York City.
2. Assist in program compliance with Head Start's federal mandate for oral exams and follow-up care.
3. Educate dental and dental hygiene students and pediatric dental residents about the necessity and importance of community involvement through service learning.
4. Increase the pediatric patient pool.
5. Hold educational workshops for parents to teach them early prevention techniques.
6. Provide child oriented oral hygiene instruction with a nutritional component.

### **Methods:**

- Outreach--performed on site at Head Start centers, scheduled four days a week from September through June, providing dental exams, fluoride varnish applications, and oral hygiene instruction.
- Treatment Busing program—transportation provided to dental facility for follow up care.
- Education--to Head Start children, parents and staff.
- Training--of dental and dental hygiene students and pediatric dentistry residents.

### **Program Length:**

1994 through present. The program was expanded and incorporated into the dental school curriculum in September 2007.

**Number of target population reached by effort:**

Over 25,000 children (up to 5,000 HS children annually) have benefited from the program, receiving oral examinations, preventive services and oral health education.

**Demographic Info:**

Our program serves Head Start, daycare, and Pre-K children in the NYC area. This population is urban, low income, and vastly diverse in race, ethnicity, and religion.

**Overall Cost:**

\$66,700 including materials and transportation (personnel costs not included)

**Funding Sources:**

100 % Other, Funding from NYU  
percentages are NOT estimates

**Outcomes:**

Each year, thousands of Head Start children are identified as requiring follow-up treatment. From extensive decay to the need for a simple cleaning, staff members and parents are notified and information about local providers and NYUCD's pediatric clinic is provided. Our treatment busing program alone provides over 400 annual visits to our clinic.

**Did you make any estimates regarding costs deferred, outbreaks averted or deaths prevented?**

No

**Additional Information:**

Head Start Centers have a federal mandate for oral health. Children are required to establish a dental home and have an examination within 90 days of enrollment. Our outreach program and Pediatric Clinic have been invaluable to NYC Head Start compliance with this mandate.

**Future Plans:**

The Head Start outreach program has been incorporated into a mandatory course for dental students. We plan to improve services to NYC Head Start children by spearheading a consortium of pediatric dental clinics and residency programs throughout NYC where children can be referred for services. We are also expanding our partnership with the Administration for Children's Services to provide more in-clinic services for Head Start children.