



## MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

### State Oral Health Program

**Purpose:** The State Oral Health Program strives to protect and promote oral health for all Mississippians.

#### Program Goals and Accomplishments:

- **Assess oral health status and needs so that problems can be identified and addressed.**
  - **Survey of Third Grade Children in Public Schools** – An open-mouth survey of oral health in third grade children was completed during the **2009-2010** school-year. Results are noted in **bold** in comparison with results from the FY2005 survey in *italics*:
    - **63%** (*69%*) of third grade children have experience with tooth decay (caries).
    - **31%** (*39%*) have **untreated** tooth decay (cavities).
    - **23.5%** (*26%*) of third grade children have preventive dental sealants on permanent molar teeth.
    - **5%** (*10%*) of third grade children need **urgent** dental care.
  - **Survey of Oral Health in Head Start Children** – An open-mouth survey of oral health in Head Start children ages 3-5 years was completed during the 2007-2008 school year. The results were:
    - 41% of Head Start children have **untreated** dental decay (cavities) and need dental care.
    - Over 7% of Head Start children need **urgent** dental care.
    - Overall, 56% of all Head Start children in Mississippi have experience with dental caries.
  - **Dental Visits Among Mississippi Adults** – The *Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System* (BRFSS) is a random sample telephone survey of the adult (18 years of age and older) civilian non-institutionalized population in the state. Oral health questions are included every other year.
    - In FY2008, 2 in 5 or 40.5% of respondents reported that they have not seen a dentist within the last twelve months. In FY2006, the proportion of respondents was 40.2%.
  - **Oral Health of Pregnant Women** – The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is a joint project between the MSDH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to determine why some babies are born healthy and others are not.
    - Only one in three or 34% of respondents said they received information from a dental or health care worker on how to care for their teeth and gums during pregnancy.
- **Develop plans and policies through collaborative process that support individual and community oral health efforts to address oral health needs.**
  - **Community Water Fluoridation Requirement** – In 2009, the State Board of Health passed a regulation to require community water fluoridation for systems serving a population of at least 2,000. No system shall be required to comply unless sufficient funds are identified by the Health Department. (i.e. appropriations, capital outlay, grants or similar means or sources of funds).
  - **State Oral Health Plan (2006-2010)** – The state oral health plan can be accessed under “Reports” at <http://www.healthyms.com/dental>.
  - **Mississippi Oral Health Community Alliance (MOHCA)** – MOHCA is a statewide oral health coalition that received IRS verification as a tax-exempt not-for-profit 501(C)(3) organization in December 2009. More information is located at <http://www.HealthyMS.com/MOHCA>.
- **Link people to population-based oral health services and assure the availability, access and acceptability of these services.**
  - **Community Water Fluoridation** – The program provides funds to communities to establish new water fluoridation programs through the assistance of the Bower Foundation and federal funding from the CDC and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

- As of December 31, 2009, **54.9%** of Mississippi's total population on public water receives the benefits of fluoridated water and 45.1% of the population does not.
  - Since 2003, 76 public water systems have agreed to start water fluoridation programs that serve over **294,702** people. This includes public water systems on a waiting list to receive assistance when funding is identified.
- **Preventive Fluoride Varnish Program** – Fluoride varnish is a highly concentrated form of fluoride that is applied to the surfaces of teeth to prevent tooth decay. Regional Oral Health Consultants are licensed dental hygienists employed by the MSDH to provide age appropriate dental risk assessment, oral health screening, and fluoride varnish applications for eligible children in Head Start programs and Child Care Centers statewide.
  - In FY 2009, 3,400 children age three to five years in Head Start received an oral health screening and fluoride varnish application.
  - A letter of referral for unmet dental needs is sent to a local dentist and the child's Head Start Center.
- **Oral Health Education** – Regional Oral Health Consultants provide oral health education for families enrolled in the Women Children and Infant (WIC) Program. Classes are conducted at WIC Food Centers as requirement for women to receive support. Consultants also conduct *Cavity Free Kids* (CFK) classes. CFK is a train-the-trainer program designed to teach child caregivers how to care for children's teeth and prevent dental diseases. Those who train may use the curriculum to provide oral health education to families and groups of children. Continuing education credit is available for child care center licensure and for most health care providers.
  - In FY 2009, 379 oral health education programs were held in community-based settings statewide.
- **School-Based Preventive Dental Sealants** – Preventive dental sealants are placed on the permanent first molar teeth at no cost to children in school-based health centers through a statewide partnership with community programs such as Federally Qualified Health Centers.
  - To date, about 22,140 sealants have been placed on permanent first molar teeth in 6,912 second-grade children in Public Health District III and Issaquena/Sharkey counties.
- **Safety-Net Dental Care** – Tomorrow's Dental Office Today (TDOT) is a safety-net mobile dental clinic on wheels that is used to provide community-based dental care with volunteer dental professionals. The clinic may be moved to a different location based on the unmet need in the community and availability of volunteer providers.
  - In June 2009, dentists with the TX Army Reserve spent two weeks in Clarksdale providing dental care.
  - In February 2010, dental students and faculty at the University of Mississippi Medical Center School of Dentistry provided three days of dental care.
  - In June 2010, volunteer dentists from Mississippi provided three days of dental care in Jonestown.
- **VIPR (Volunteers in Preparedness Registry)** - The MSDH Office of Emergency Planning and Response promotes the need for dental personnel to serve as emergency workers for deployment in the event of a disaster or public health emergency. Dental professionals may register on the web at <http://volunteer.msdh.state.ms.us> or call 1-866-HLTHY4U for more information.
  - CME opportunities are also available for dental study clubs thru VIPR.

For more information about the State Oral Health Program, visit our web page at [www.healthyMS.com/dental](http://www.healthyMS.com/dental) or call (601) 576-7500.