

Surveys

Surveys can be conducted in a *written* format via mail, email, fax, website, newsletter, newspaper; or *orally* in person, on the radio, TV, or by telephone. Try to select a medium that is most relevant for potential participants and will ensure an adequate and accurate response. Questions can be closed-ended (a choice of responses is provided) or open-ended (participants respond in their own words). It is important to field test the questions with some members of the proposed audience before you finalize and conduct the survey. Try to survey a representative sample of your targeted population group. If you need to conduct the survey in more than one language, make sure you have someone help you design the survey in each language rather than doing a literal translation. Many English words do not have equivalent words in other languages so different phrasing may be needed.

Sample Closed-ended Questions

1. How many children do you see on average per week in your practice?
 none 1-5 6-10 10-15 more than 15
2. Would any of the following actions by the county First 5 Commission help you treat more young children? (check all that would help you)
 buy some equipment
 cover costs of some supplies
 arrange/pay for centralized billing for Medi-Ca/Healthy Families reimbursement
 help families complete paperwork
 provide a translator if the family does not speak English
 arrange for transportation so the family can get to the appointment
 pay for a portion of malpractice insurance
 follow-up with health education, etc with the family
 arrange/pay for child care so parent can come to appointment without other children

Sample Open-ended Questions

1. Where do parents go in your community to get dental care for a young child? Do the options change if they have private dental insurance? Medi-Ca? Healthy Families? No insurance? Extensive dental treatment needs?
2. What types of barriers or frustrations, if any, have you encountered trying to find dental care for a child under age 5?
3. During the past 12 months, was there any time when your child needed dental care, but didn't get it because you couldn't afford it?
4. What types of barriers or frustrations have you had when trying to prevent dental problems from developing in young children?
5. What would motivate you to accept more children who are on Medi-Cal or Healthy Families in your practice?

6. What could the following groups do to help improve children's oral health in this community?
- Government programs, e.g., WIC, Head Start:
 - Health professionals:
 - Local businesses:
 - Family resource centers:
 - Child care workers:
 - First 5 Commission:
 - Local media, e.g., radio, newspapers:
 - Schools:
 - Faith-based organizations:
 - Service clubs:

Resources

The Dental Oral and Craniofacial Data Resource Center, funded by the National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research and the Division of Oral Health at CDC, has completed a searchable catalog of surveys related to oral health that are available as a Microsoft Access database on a CD ROM or via the website <http://drc.nidcr.nih.gov>. The database includes information describing over 260 private, state, federal and international surveys that have oral health content. Users may search the catalog by specifying a combination of survey title, type, oral health, and demographic variables. The catalog describes surveys and studies related to oral health, including: sample design, data collection methods, population studied or surveyed, geographic region, references (literature containing statistics and summaries of the study or survey). Survey questions for some studies are included.

The American Statistical Association has produced a series of brochures, written for the general public, that provides easy-to-understand information on conducting surveys. The brochures can be downloaded with Adobe Acrobat from the ASA website at <http://amstat.org/sections/srms>. Topics include:

1. "What is a Survey ?"
2. "How to Plan a Survey"
3. "How to Collect Survey Data"
4. "Judging the Quality of a Survey"
5. "How to Conduct Pretesting"
6. "What are Focus Groups?"
7. "More About Mail Surveys"

8."What is a Margin Of Error?"

9."Designing a Questionnaire"

10."More About Telephone Surveys"

Community Partnerships for Healthy Children. *We Did it Ourselves. Guidelines for Successful Community Collaboration*. Sacramento, CA: Sierra Health Foundation. 2000.