

Linking Oral Health to Other Programmatic Areas

Focus	Oral Health Example
School readiness	Children cannot learn if they are in dental pain; integrate oral health concepts into vocabulary and lesson plans
Nutrition/WIC	Create “dental friendly” food lists and feeding behaviors; oral screenings and fluoride varnishes; parent counseling and referral to dental provider
Child care	Oral health curriculum for training child care workers; educational materials to give parents; “dental friendly” food lists and feeding behaviors
Tobacco cessation	Emphasize link between smoking and periodontal disease, which can influence pre-term births
Prenatal/perinatal	Include anticipatory guidance on oral health; emphasize link between maternal transmission of bacteria and children’s dental caries—need for caregivers (especially mothers) to maintain their own oral health
Diabetes	Pregnant women and mothers who are diabetics are more susceptible to dental caries and periodontal disease, which can ultimately affect their babies
Obesity	Emphasize that some of the same food choices that lead to obesity also contribute to dental caries
Well child care	Early and frequent health and dental check-ups and use of preventive measures
Parenting	Oral care is an integral part of good parenting skills
English as a second language (ESL) classes	Include oral health terminology and dental care concepts to improve own oral health plus understanding and communication with dental providers
Literacy	Place more dental stories for children in libraries and family resource centers; reading ability will enable families to fill out medical/dental history forms and understand written instructions
Injury prevention	Prevention of oral injuries from trauma, child abuse, domestic abuse, etc. is important for oral health
Birth defects	Developmental defects such as cleft lip/palate can be at least partially prevented through ingestion of adequate amounts of folic acid and limiting smoking and use of alcohol
HIV/AIDS	Oral infections are common in children and adults infected with HIV
Bioterrorism	Dental offices or mobile vans can be used in case of bioterrorism attacks to help triage and treat affected populations
Family Resource Centers	Conduct family oral health screenings, create a library of oral health materials, enroll families for medical and dental coverage, maintain dental referral directories or refer to a case manager
Child safety	Do “toothprint” program when doing child fingerprints
CSHCN	Counsel about increased risk factors for oral problems and provide training on oral health/dental care for CSHCN