

Environmental Survey Response

1. Name of project:

Bright Smiles from Birth: An Oral Health Education and Technical Assistance Program

2. Key project personnel, roles and contact information

Jennie Pinkwater, Project Director, Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics, 312/733-1026 x 213, jpinkwater@illinoisAAP.com

3. Is there information on a website? URL?

Yes, information can be found on the Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics website at www.illinoisAAP.org or accessed directly at <http://illinoisAAP.org/projects/bright-smiles/>. The project also has a provider training site at <http://www.brightsmilesfrombirth.org/>.

4. What is the target population?

Pediatric primary care providers (pediatricians, family physicians, PNP) serving children 0-3 and their practice/clinic staff, statewide

5. Short description/overview of project

Bright Smiles from Birth (BSFB) is a peer-to-peer oral health education program for primary care providers focused on prevention of Early Childhood Caries (ECC). ECC is a common, complex, chronic infectious disease affecting approximately 29% of low income children in Illinois. BSFB gives primary care providers the tools to prevent ECC by providing information on the pathogenesis of ECC and teaching how to perform oral health and caries risk assessments, apply fluoride varnish and refer to dental homes. Providers who complete the BSFB are eligible to receive reimbursement from Medicaid for application of fluoride varnish on children under three.

6. Describe the elements of practice transformation within your project. Are you using the medical home model? Are you using a standard definition or evaluation tool for medical home model?

As recommended by Bright Futures, primary care providers should begin providing oral health information to families beginning at the 6 month well child visit; the BSFB program provides strategies to practices to implement that service. BSFB also provides a resource kit containing information on best practices, policy statements from dental and pediatric professional organizations, sample brochures and reproducible handouts for families in English and Spanish. BSFB also provides practices with fluoride varnish to begin their program and provides additional hands-on training on fluoride varnish application in requested. BSFB provides additional technical assistance on billing and coding and through discussions with staff. BSFB does not explicitly use a medical home model or evaluation tool but teaches primary care offices about practice systems change and care coordination with local dentists and oral health resources.

7. Describe the elements of community linkages within your project.

Bright Smiles from Birth works with practices to find a referral source for establishment of dental homes. Practices are encouraged to utilize the DentaQuest hotline to find Medicaid providers and to reach out to local dentists to develop referral list. Assistance is provided by ICAAP staff as needed.

8. Describe key collaborative relationships

Key collaborators include:

- the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services and its programs such as Illinois Health Connect, which provide funding, outreach to primary care providers, and supportive policy changes (ie, reimbursement);
- the Illinois Society of Pediatric Dentists and the Illinois State Dental Society which provide technical assistance and faculty
- the Illinois Department of Public Health which provides outreach to community providers, technical assistance and financial support
- the Illinois Primary Health Care Association which provides assistance in recruitment of federally qualified health centers

9. Length of time in existence

Bright Smiles from Birth was established in 2005.

10. Describe the funding of the project

Bright Smiles from Birth is funded by the Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation, the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Michael Reese Health Trust.

11. Describe how you intend or are currently evaluating the project. What outcomes are you tracking?

Evaluation of Bright Smiles from Birth centers on claims data obtained from the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services. Data regarding the number of varnish applications provided in a primary care setting, number of children under three receiving restorative dental care, and age of first dental visit is reviewed. BSFB seeks to increase the number of fluoride varnish applications in a primary care setting, decrease restorative care in children under three and decrease in the age of the first dental visit.

12. What are the results of the project to date?

As of March 31, 2011, 272 training have been held for 1,217 primary care providers. As of June 30, 2010 a total of 9,165 claims for fluoride varnish were processed. Pre and post tests show an increase in knowledge of attendees and evaluations indicate providers are willing to integrate oral health into practice.

13. Briefly list key challenges and successes?

Key challenges include perceived lack of time to add oral health messages and application of fluoride varnish to the practice routine. Additional barriers include lack of reimbursement for oral health assessments and difficulty billing given the need to use a dental code. Providers also cite a lack of quality referral sources for children covered by the Medicaid program. Many providers have been successful in integrating oral health into their practices and have improved their patients' oral health.

14. What support or resources do you need in order to expand or replicate your project?

Additional staff time and experts are needed for ongoing training, re-training and technical assistance to work with providers to make the necessary practice changes. Additional training for general dentists on caring for young children needs to be conducted to increase the number of dental homes available to children under three. More dental providers need to be recruited to the Medicaid medical program to provide both preventive and restorative services.