

Title of Project: Community Partnership in the Prevention of Early Childhood Caries

Agency Name: Kauai WIC Program

State: Hawaii

Key Word Descriptors: Dental health, children, community, partnership

Description of Project:

The Kauai WIC Program is an active participant in addressing a community coordinated effort toward improving dental health on Kauai. WIC serves as the "cornerstone" for early engagement of families in gaining knowledge about dental care and its plays the crucial role of working side by side with agencies to engage families in developing good dental health lifestyle. WIC makes dental education interactive and fun for parents and children in the clinic setting as well as the community in multiple venues such as Children's Fun Day, Women's Health Fair, County Farm Fair, Annual Pregnant Teens/Teen Parents Conference, Annual Dental Health Conference, just to name a few.

WIC employs a wide range of means to teach dental health education such as pre-post tests, interactive games, short educational video featuring Kauai children, appealing and creative educational board displays, and distribution to participants the sippy cups and the educational handout materials, and other incentives which were developed by the Dental Health Task Force such as book marks, and short information on prevention of childhood caries. In addition, the WIC clinic has an environment that promotes good dental health and supporting instruction in the educational classroom and throughout the clinic.

Results of Project:

1. Multi-pronged, multi-agency, interdisciplinary and collaborative partnership in addressing a critical public health concern in dental health.
2. Sequential approach that addresses dental health from pregnancy to adulthood.
3. Engagement of wide range of community agencies that marshals critical fiscal and other resource support to enhance the dental health and well-being of the people on Kauai.
4. Prevention message delivered by multiple approaches increases retention and reinforces efforts in dental education.
5. The Kauai effort has gotten the attention of state legislatures, state agencies, and many service providers and has provided the impetus for other islands to replicate the local effort.
6. Kauai WIC is currently preparing educational materials that will be distributed to all the WIC agencies in the state.

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