

Title of Intervention: A Postal Program for Oral Health Promotion

Intervention Strategies: Environments and Policies, Campaigns and Promotions

Purpose of the Intervention: To encourage tooth brushing by young children

Population: Children

Setting: Homes with small children in the northwest England; home-based

Partners: None mentioned

Intervention Description:

- Environments and Policies: From 12 months to five and a half years of age, children were mailed toothpaste every three months and a toothbrush every year. The toothpaste was either high or low fluoride.
- Campaigns and Promotions: Leaflets with instructions to use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste and to brush children's teeth twice daily were also sent to the homes.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Not mentioned
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Not mentioned
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Leaflets, toothpaste, toothbrushes, postage
- Evaluation: Clinical examination tools

Evaluation:

- Design: Randomized controlled trial
- Methods and Measures:
 - Oral examinations to measure decayed, missing, filled teeth (DMFT)

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: Not measured
- Long Term Impact: The children who received toothpaste with higher fluoride had a lower mean DMFT scores than those who had received the toothpaste with lower fluoride and those who did not receive toothpaste. Those children who received toothpaste with high fluoride had less dental caries than the other two groups. Those children who received toothpaste with low fluoride had less dental caries than those who did not receive toothpaste.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: The provision of toothpaste with low concentrations of fluoride did not provide a significant benefit in these high-risk communities. The use of a postal program has the benefit of reaching participants who have access barriers, but there are disadvantages of not allowing face-to-face contact between health promoters and parents.

Citation(s):

Davies GM, Worthington HV, Ellwood RP, et al. An assessment of the cost effectiveness of a postal toothpaste programme to prevent caries among five-year-old children in the North West of England. *Community Dent Health*. Dec 2003;20(4):207-210.

Davies GM, Worthington HV, Ellwood RP, et al. A randomised controlled trial of the effectiveness of providing free fluoride toothpaste from the age of 12 months on reducing caries in 5-6 year old children. *Community Dent Health*. Sep 2002;19(3):131-136.