



National Center on
Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety



April 2023 | Issue No. 26

Using Case Management to Improve Oral Health Care

Welcome to Resources to Make You Smile! This monthly newsletter features information and tools Head Start staff can use to help families promote good oral health. These tips help Head Start staff support families, pregnant women and pregnant people, and children. The newsletter also includes a recipe for a healthy snack that children can make in a Head Start classroom or at home with their families.

Case Management



Case management is a process for professionals and families to work together to identify and overcome barriers to accessing and using health and social services. It is tailored to each family's strengths and challenges. In Head Start programs, case management is usually done by health and family service managers, family service workers, and home visitors.

Case managers can talk to families about the importance of oral health, regular dental visits, and follow-up treatment, if needed. They can also facilitate access to oral health care, including by finding oral health professionals that provide care to children and pregnant women and pregnant people. The case manager and families work together to make sure everyone can access and receive oral health services.

Resources for Staff

[Head Start Oral Health Forms — Children and Pregnant Women](#)

Ask families to have their dentist complete the appropriate form after every dental visit. The information can be used to monitor and track whether oral health needs are being met and to determine if the child is up to date according to their state's [Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment](#) dental periodicity schedule.

[Using Case Management to Improve Oral Health Care](#)

Discover what case management is and how it can be used to improve the oral health of children and pregnant women and pregnant people enrolled in Head Start programs. Learn how case management can be used to improve access to care and meet oral health needs. This tip sheet is part of the [Brush Up on Oral Health](#) series that offers up-to-date practices and simple tips to promote good oral health.

Resources for Parents

[Healthy Habits for Healthy Smiles](#)

Share these handouts with families enrolled in Head Start programs to encourage them to make and keep dental appointments, take their child to the dentist by age 1, and understand the importance of follow-up care.

- [Getting Oral Health Treatment Is Important!](#)
- [Taking Care of Your Oral Health When You Are Pregnant](#)
- [Visiting the Dentist by Age 1](#)

[Getting to Know Me: Information for a Pregnant Woman's Dental Office](#)

This form is designed for pregnant women and pregnant people to share information about themselves with dental office staff. It includes questions about prenatal care, what a woman does to take care of her mouth and teeth, and her experiences during pregnancy.

[Getting to Know Me: Information for Your Child's Dental Office](#)

This form is designed for parents to share information about their child with dental office staff to help them meet the child's needs. It includes questions about what makes a child smile or feel good, what may motivate the child to behave, and what to do when the child becomes shy, scared, or unsure during their dental visit.

[Questions to Ask When Looking for a Dental Office](#)

Finding a dental office to meet the unique care, language, insurance, and other needs of children and pregnant women and pregnant people can be hard. This tip sheet provides examples of some questions that families can ask dental office staff before deciding to make an appointment.

Cook's Corner Recipe: Grape and Blueberry Earth Day Globes

Note: Earth Day, celebrated every year on April 22, raises awareness of the need to protect the earth's natural resources for future generations.

Ingredients

- 4 ounces low-fat cream cheese
- 6 rice cakes
- 1 cup blueberries, cut in half
- 1 cup green grapes, cut in half

Directions



1. Spread a layer of cream cheese on rice cake.
2. Place 4 to 6 grape halves on cream cheese to form land.
3. Place blueberry halves around grapes to form oceans.

Makes 6 servings

Safety tip: To prevent injuries, an adult should slice ingredients.

Stay Connected!

Join [MyPeers](#) to connect with Head Start and early childhood colleagues around the country on this and other topics. Members of the **Health, Safety, and Wellness** community are currently networking, sharing, and learning from each other. Find it under "All Communities" and select the blue "Join" button.

Please share this issue with others who may be interested.

Did someone forward you this newsletter? [Subscribe](#) to stay up to date!

We Want to Hear from You!

Send your questions or comments to the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety at health@ecetta.info or (toll-free) 888-227-5125.

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