

ORAL HEALTH SECTION

Georgia Oral Health Prevention Program (GOHPP)

What is the purpose of the program?

To prevent dental disease among Georgians.

What does the program do?

- Public health dental hygienists and dentists provide preventive dental health services to children in school-based programs, including fluoride rinses, dental sealants, dental health education and screenings/referrals.
- Provides dental health services to children, referred through school-based preventive health services, who do not have access to a private provider, or a community health center with a dentist.
- Provides training to public health nutritionists in promoting prevention of early childhood caries/ECC (baby bottle tooth decay). Also trains public health and school nurses on providing oral screening for dental disease.
- Promotes use of fluoridated water through monitoring and surveillance of community water systems and through education about the benefits of fluoridation.

How many people are helped by the program?

Ninety three percent of Georgia's population using public water systems receive optimally fluoridated water. In FY2003, 196,869 children at 309 sites in all 19 health districts received dental services.

Why is the program important?

Preventive dental services reduce serious and costly dental problems. Every dollar invested in preventive dentistry saves as much as \$147 in future expenses. Georgia's low-income children have access to preventive and treatment oral health services through school-based programs.

Who is eligible?

- Georgia citizens who use community water systems.
- School-based prevention programs target schools with children who lack access to preventive dental health services due to income and/or location.
- Children up to 285% of the federal poverty level are eligible for clinical services such as dental sealants and dental treatment services on a sliding-fee scale.

Where are services located?

Georgia Oral Health Prevention Programs (GOHPP) are located in all of the 19 health districts. Georgia's low-income children receive prevention and treatment services through the use of portable dental equipment (1-2 in each health district) or mobile dental trailers and vans (9 trailers in 7 health districts, 2 vans in Fulton).

Outcome Measures

- Increase number of Georgians served by fluoridated community water systems with optimal levels of fluoride.
- Increase the proportion of eligible low-income elementary school children who receive protective sealants on the biting (chewing) surfaces of permanent molar teeth.
- Increase the proportion of low-income elementary school children who receive dental health education.
- Increase the proportion of low-income eligible children who receive dental screenings and referrals.
- Increase the proportion of eligible low-income elementary school children who are treated in public health facilities and are free of oral-related pain and active oral disease.
- Improve screening to reduce the number of children reported as emergency "red" failures.

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