

T.O.O.T.H. Talks



Talking Openly about Oral and Tooth Health

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Abstract

Purpose: Implement an educational program that helps increase dental knowledge and improve access to dental care for homeless families in transition. **Methods:** Create monthly T.O.O.T.H. Talks: *Talking openly about our tooth health* to present to every second Tuesday of the month via Zoom during Family Promise daily house meetings. These are 15-minute lesson oral health lessons on basic oral health, resources for dental care, and more. We began each talk with an "Icebreaker Quiz" on the week's topic to gather a baseline assessment on the dental knowledge of families.

Evaluation: Residents valued the program in terms of topics covered, the time spent interacting, and found the presentations applicable. Residents provided input on future topics to "talk about" at future T.O.O.T.H. Talks.

Conclusions: Continuing this partnership helps dental hygiene students to build a relationship between homeless families in transition. Each class will have a group of students that will continue to plan monthly presentations that focuses on different oral health objectives.

Program Goal

To Improve the oral health of children and families in transitional residence.



Community Partner Mission and Vision

We worked in partnership with Family Promise of Spokane. Family Promise is a program for homeless families with children can seek shelter. They provide support, networking, and skills for families to help maintain housing. Their mission and vision is to see *a future where no child experiences homelessness* and are here to equip families and the community to end the cycle of homelessness.

Implementing Monthly T.O.O.T.H. Talks

T.O.O.T.H. Talks are monthly sessions held virtually during Family Promise House Hour. Each of these sessions addresses an issue of importance to residents related to oral health, nutrition, and accessing dental care.

Residents provide input on topics they would like to know more about. Each tooth talk module is tailored to age-appropriate education and anticipatory guidance.

Community Need

Improving homeless families in transition dental knowledge is essential for a child's oral health. Awareness of proper nutrition and maintaining good oral hygiene will improve oral health. Knowledge of when to initiate dental visits and why regular visits are important can help start a lifelong habit for children. Providing families with important information such as the child's first visit should be after the eruption of the first tooth or by the child's first birthday. Reduce families' caries risk by gaining knowledge about over-the-counter fluoride products and fluoride varnish application in dental visits. Providing prevention methods such as regular dental visits, proper homecare, proper nutrition, and fluoride application will help with oral health. Improving access to dental care by providing resources will help families find dental homes.

What We Learned

Throughout this community project, we have learned the disparity of the access of dental care and resources are to the populations. We have learned the importance of community partnership and working alongside an organization to help us understand how to provide back for members in this population when we are in the dental hygiene field. It strengthened our knowledge of community health programs and how to implement them which is important when helping provide individualized treatment care to our patients.

Civic Perspective

Creating the first T.O.O.T.H. Talk allowed us to use prior knowledge from classroom lecture to make for a successful presentation for the targeted population. The outcomes from this experience were beneficial and positive as it will be a continue implementation with each passing class at EWU. We have established a form of communication with Family Promise and developed monthly oral health conversations during house meetings as a results.

Logic Model

Input / Resources	Inputs Activities	Outputs	Outcomes- Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Promise residents and staff EWU Dental Hygiene students Zoom House Meeting equipment Oral health products 	Lesson Plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nutrition / cariogenic foods What to expect on first dental visit Purpose of primary and permanent dentition Tooth decay Caries prevention methods 	Three students worked together to create and share a virtual presentation via Zoom once a month during their "House Meeting". Topics discussed were from our lesson plan, and during our last T.O.O.T.H Talk an email will be sent out for participant to fill out a post survey.	Short Term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are aware of when to take their child to the dentist for the first time Prevention methods for tooth decay. Intermediate Term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families will schedule and attend their first dental appointment Patients make healthy decisions regarding homecare and nutrition Long Term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patients establish a dental home, better oral health, and less childhood caries in this population.