

# St. Margaret's Shelter: Families in Transition

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## Abstract

**Target Population:** St. Margaret's Catholic Charities of Spokane, families in transition. Specifically, pregnant mothers and children. **Statement of the Problem:** This population experiences a lack of proper oral care due to lack of access and stability, low level of oral education and socioeconomic status. Furthermore, tooth decay remains the most prevalent chronic disease in both children and adults. **Needs Assessment:** The needs assessment identified a need for education on oral health for pregnant mothers and children regarding home care, nutrition, the efficacy of fluoride, and establishment of a dental home. **Program Planning:** This project utilized the logic model in program planning of an oral health education intervention, including program inputs, outputs, and program outcomes. **Implementation:** Program presentation to families residing at St. Margaret's in Spokane. **Evaluation:** Program evaluation included an 8-item posttest design to measure program objectives related to desired program outcomes.



## Implementation: What We Did

Monthly 1-hour health education and health promotion sessions and screenings.

- Nutrition counseling
- Importance of primary dentition
- Oral systemic link
- Importance of fluoride
- Identified dental access sources
- Provided oral health care products and literature (pamphlet)
- Children's coloring activity
- Puppets to demonstrate proper tooth brushing and flossing
- Demonstrate homecare

## Mission and Vision

St. Margaret's Shelter provides emergency and transitional shelter to promote positive life changes in a supportive, short-term environment. St. Margaret's Shelter offers social services that include individualized case management to regain and stabilize housing for families experiencing homelessness.



## What We Learned

We learned valuable lessons about being aware of the needs of our community. We learned about our duty to act and the rewarding process of meeting the needs of our community partner. This helped us to prepare for our role as educators and active members of our community as dental hygienists and educated health care professionals. This was definitely a mutually beneficial program. Our community partner was able to gain knowledge and resources including tools to establish a dental home, and oral health care supplies. Our partnership helped St. Margaret's meet their own goals of helping families in transition by addressing their oral health needs. We were able to facilitate together a program for learning about oral health for mothers and children that may have otherwise been unaware.

## Civic Perspective

The partnership provided the opportunity to collaborate with an community partners in an interprofessional and service-learning capacity, being mutually beneficial . Our partnership helped St. Margaret's meet their goals of helping families in transition by addressing their oral health needs. We were able to facilitate together a program for learning about oral health for mothers and children that may have otherwise been unaware.