

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Name of the Organization: The Emma Lazarus School PS 268

Contact Person: Sylvia Leslie-Fairclough, principal

Identify the participants (who they are and why you chose them):

We chose to teach oral hygiene to a class of 30 first graders in a New York City public school. The reason that we chose first graders is that children at this age begin learning how to read and interact with other kids; they are becoming more self-aware and are impacted by the opinions of others about their appearance. This is why we felt that children aged 5-7 years are the perfect audience for our demonstration and lessons, because they are old enough to understand the lessons we were teaching, and even though it is still up to the parent to make sure healthy oral hygiene is maintained at home, these children can actively brush their own teeth and start to adapt healthy hygiene habits. We also felt that because many young children are afraid of the dentist, it would be beneficial to teach them what we wear and who we are, as hygienists, to help desensitize them at an early age.

According to an article from PubMed.gov, “*Dental caries* is the most common chronic *infectious disease* of childhood, and early childhood caries (ECC) is a serious public health problem in both developing and industrialized countries.” There are many research papers devoted to educating the public and healthcare professionals about ECC’s potential to significantly impact a child’s life. “ECC can begin early in life, progresses rapidly in those who are at high risk, and often goes untreated. Its consequences can affect the immediate and long-term quality of life of the child and family, and can have significant social and economic consequences beyond the immediate family as well.” The research concluded that the association between ECC and the socioeconomic status (SES) suggests that ECC is more commonly found in children “who live in poverty or in poor economic conditions, who belong to ethnic and racial minorities, who are born to single mothers, and whose parents have low educational level, especially those of illiterate mothers.”

Since we have access to the most diverse neighborhoods in the country, we felt that a public school in Brooklyn or Queens would allow us to reach the most diverse mix of children.

Title of the Project: “Taking Care of Your Teeth Is Fun!”

Objectives: to teach first graders about:

- dental caries and ways to prevent them
- the importance of good oral hygiene and regular dental checkups
- our role as a hygienist and what we look like in our PPE
- healthy food choices to promote oral health
- proper brushing of their teeth

Research supporting oral health needs of this population:

Colak H, Corul T, Dulgergi CT, Dalli M, Hamidi MM. Early childhood caries update: A review of causes, diagnosis and treatments. *J Nat Sci Biol Med.* 2013. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3633299/>. Date accessed: April 20, 2015.

Markowitz K, Fairlie K, Ferrandiz J, Nasri-Heir C, Fine DH. A longitudinal study of occlusal caries in Newark New Jersey school children: relationship between initial dental finding and the development of new lesions. *Archives of oral biology.*2012. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3498604/>. Date accessed: April 21, 2015.

Chankanka O, Cavanaugh JE, Levy SM, et al. Longitudinal associations between children’s dental caries and risk factors. *Journal of public health dentistry.*2011. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4353577/>. Date accessed April 21, 2015.

2. LESSON PLAN: [linked here](#)

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT:

We arrived at the school at 8:30 am on April 24th to set up in the auditorium. The principal reserved the room for us because it had a projector for our PowerPoint presentation. After setting up, the children and teacher arrived. We started our presentation with an introduction of ourselves and told the children why we were there. Then we went through each slide, explaining our topics. We covered the importance of a healthy dentition, going to the dentist, how to keep your teeth clean, and how to brush their teeth properly. We asked some questions about what the teeth do, and all the kids were eager to answer. Then, we taught them a song about brushing their teeth before continuing with our PowerPoint presentation.

We taught them about eating healthy food, avoiding sugary snacks and soft drinks, and the effects of sugar on the teeth (caries). During the presentation we stopped to ask questions to keep the children engaged. After speaking about nutrition, we asked them questions, such as, “What’s better for your teeth, a banana or a lollipop? And what’s the best drink - soda or water?” The children were very interactive and excited to answer questions.

We finished up the PowerPoint portion with information on sealants and mouth guards. We wanted to briefly mention these points but not in detail, because they were too complicated for the children to comprehend. To review what we taught the children, we asked questions at the end, as well. Then we sang our song once more with them.

Finally, we played an eight-minute video for them - “Geena, the Giraffe” - to further reinforce our lessons. When the video was finished, we used our typodonts and stuffed animals to go around to all the students so they could show us how to brush their teeth. They were excited to play with the stuffed animals and typodonts and enjoyed interacting with us. Then, we invited the children to come up to meet Madina, who was dressed as a tube of toothpaste. Madina gave each student a goody bag that we had purchased from our school clinic. Along with the toothbrush and toothpaste, each child also received a Connect-the-Dot color page. Once they received their bag, we gave them each a sticker to wear.

PowerPoint presentation linked [here](#)

4. ASSESSMENT:

- Participant assessment – this assessment was done by Q&A during the presentation
- Project coordinator assessment/evaluation – is [linked here](#)

5. GROUP MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Heather Killian:

- point of contact for the principal - set up a day/time, send her updates to our PowerPoint and lesson plan
- coordinate getting the video and stuffed animals from Professor Lam
- edit and help with PowerPoint slides
- transport stuffed animals and goody bags to the school the day of the presentation
- present the PowerPoint slides on stage with Vlad
- interact with the children individually in the audience by asking oral hygiene questions and teach them to brush their teeth by demonstrating with the stuff animals
- write Service Learning post and link documents to post on openlab

Madina Makisheva:

- make the PowerPoint presentation
- dress like a tube of toothpaste for the day of the presentation
- control the slide show while Vlad and Heather spoke
- sing the song with the children about brushing
- coordinate with Tracey to buy the goody bags from the clinic
- burn the CD for Professor Lam so we could use it for our project
- purchase stickers for the children
- interact with the children individually in the audience by asking oral hygiene questions and teach them to brush their teeth by demonstrating with the stuff animals

Vladlen Berlin:

- make photocopies of “Award for Dental Hygiene” that we gave to the teachers to hand out in class
- interact with the children individually in the audience by asking oral hygiene questions and teach them to brush their teeth by demonstrating with the stuff animals
- present the PowerPoint on stage with Heather
- write the lesson plan

Silvia Solis:

- teach the children how to brush with the tyodont
- interact with the children individually in the audience by asking oral hygiene questions and teach them to brush their teeth by demonstrating with the stuff animals
- hand out NYCCT Dental Hygiene flyers to the teachers and other school faculty to let them know about our services

- make the evaluation questions to review with the children at the end of the presentation

Chitra Sukhraj:

- print the Connect-the-Dots coloring page and assisted in preparing the goody bags
- present and collect the observation rubric from the teacher
- assist with oral hygiene information for the presentation and make up a tooth brushing song for the children
- teach the children the song/poem about brushing their teeth and sing along with the children on stage
- interact with the children individually in the audience by asking oral hygiene questions and teach them to brush their teeth by demonstrating with the stuff animals