

# National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety



## Dental Hygienist Liaison Project

Promoting oral health and preventing oral disease are essential to oral health and overall health. Because of the importance of oral health during pregnancy and early childhood, the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS), working in partnership with the American Dental Hygienists' Association, administers the Dental Hygienist Liaison (DHL) project. Under the DHL project, one dental hygienist from each state volunteers to help promote oral health for pregnant women and children enrolled in Head Start.

### Role of the Dental Hygienist Liaison

DHLs promote oral health in Head Start programs by:

- Providing a communication link between NCHBHS and Head Start programs in their states
- Collaborating with state organizations such as state oral health programs and Head Start State Collaboration offices
- Providing oral health presentations at state conferences and meetings
- Offering strategies to improve access to oral health care for pregnant women and children
- Working with oral health professionals to establish partnerships with local Head Start programs to provide staff education and training
- Sharing information about the importance of oral health and regular oral health visits, good nutrition and oral hygiene practices, and oral injury prevention strategies with Head Start program staff
- Serving on Head Start committees (e.g., Head Start health manager networks, Head Start health services advisory committees) and oral health advisory boards and coalitions to promote the oral health of Head Start participants

To contact the DHL in your state, check the DHL roster at <https://www.astdd.org/docs/dhl-contact-list-by-state.pdf> or send a message to [health@ecetta.info](mailto:health@ecetta.info).



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**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**



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