



## COordinated Oral Health Promotion (CO-OP) Chicago

### The Problem

- ◆ Dental cavities are very common in children. More than half (63%) of 3rd-graders in the Chicago area have cavities.
- ◆ Community health workers (CHWs) might be able to help families prevent cavities and get dental care. However we do not know how to connect CHWs with families.

### Our Goal

CO-OP Chicago is a research study that will test an oral health CHW intervention in medical clinics and Women, Infant, and Child (WIC) centers. Before starting the study, we talked with providers, staff, and families to understand what might work and what exactly they wanted to improve oral health.

### What We Did

- ◆ Made partnerships with 10 pediatric clinics and 10 WIC centers.
- ◆ Interviewed providers, administrators, and staff (37 people total) at each of the partnership sites.
- ◆ Held 8 focus groups with parents of children under the age of 3 years old. Half of the groups were in Spanish, the other half in English. Sixty-eight parents participated.
- ◆ Observed the physical spaces and activities at each of the 20 sites.
- ◆ Then we combined all this information to determine the themes.

### What We Learned

Families, clinics, and WICs were enthusiastic about CHWs. Preferred CHW qualities were identified. Family priorities might interfere in study enrollment and intervention efficacy. Physical space in the clinics and WICs for data collection and CHWs was a major issue for some sites. Home visits for data collection and intervention delivery would be initially unacceptable for some families. The data drew a comprehensive picture of the family-level oral health resources and barriers.



### The Changes That Resulted from this Information

We made major changes in our study design because of these results:

- ◆ We opened the option for data collection to occur in the home, clinic/WIC, or in another location.
- ◆ We eliminated the home-only portion of the trial and changed to allow the clinic and WIC CHWs to meet families wherever they choose.
- ◆ Because some sites now will not receive any intervention, participants at sites that are randomized to the usual care arm will be offered CHW services after the conclusion of the study.
- ◆ Finally, we matched the CHW oral health topics to the needs of families.

### Community Partners

UI Health Child and Youth Center  
Mile Square Health Center  
Vida Pediatrics ◆ Aunt Martha's  
CEDA WIC ◆ CDPH WIC

**CO-OP enrollment starts soon!  
Look for us!**

*"We dig community health workers around here. I mean anything that can help us give better counseling and that type of thing is, yeah, would be fine."* WIC Nutritionist

*"Not even nutritional health, not even oral health, just survival is kind of a priority for some of our families."* WIC Nutritionist

*"... having a place where a community health worker is literally going to sit while they're waiting to have patients to talk to is going to be a bit of a challenge."* Pediatric Provider

*"What toothbrush to use. Like I need for you to tell me like don't say brush your teeth and then I go to the Walmart and there's 50,000 different toothpastes. Tell me what I need to get."* Caregiver

