



Start Healthy. Grow Healthy.

Fluoride Varnish Initiative

What is it?

The Fluoride Varnish Initiative is a collaborative effort between the IHS Head Start Program and IHS. The goal is to reduce dental caries among AI/AN children by providing 3-4 fluoride varnish treatments a year to 80% of AI/AN children ages 9 months through five years of age.

Background

According to the IHS 1999 Oral Health Survey, 76% of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children between the ages of 2-5 have experienced dental caries and 68% have untreated decay. Furthermore, over 50% of AI/AN children have experienced dental caries before the age of two. Prevention efforts must begin soon after the first tooth erupts.

Does fluoride varnish work?

Yes! Fluoride varnish is a proven modality for decreasing dental caries.

How will this work in my community?

You will need to work with dental and medical staff in your community to decide who will provide fluoride varnish for each age group. Below is an example.

9-24 months	4 fluoride varnish treatments	Nurses, CHRs, WIC
2-3 years	3-4 fluoride varnish treatments	CHR, WIC, PHNs Early Head Start
3-5 years	3-4 fluoride varnish treatments yearly	Head Start staff

Online Training and Instructions for Course Completion

Step I: Complete the online course and post-test with at least 80% correct answers. This will result in the printing of a certificate and handouts.

Step II: Demonstrate application of fluoride varnish on a child who is the appropriate age, following the 5 Steps and maintaining infection control principles. The observing health provider signs the certificate. The course is now fully completed!

Step III: Standing Orders are provided by a dentist or physician.

“How to Apply Fluoride Varnish” online course will be available March 2010 at <http://www.ihs.gov/HeadStart/>

On-site courses will also be available:

- March 3, 2010: Phoenix (SW Consortium)
- March 16, 2010: Seattle Oral Health Cluster Training
- April 30, 2010: Albuquerque Oral Health Cluster Training
- July 28, 2010: Tulsa Oral Health Cluster Training
- Aug 23, 2010: Rapid City Oral Health Cluster Training

