

Community Engagement and Oral Health Disparities Research



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Northeast Center for Research to Evaluate & Eliminate Dental Disparities

(The CREEDD - U54 DE019275)

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Topics

Oral health disparities research center
The CREEDD

Community engagement and community-
based participatory research

Oral Health Advocates in Public Housing

Center for Research to Evaluate and Eliminate Dental Disparities



<http://creedd.org/>

2001 – from then to now ...

- U54 DE014264 to U54 DE019275
- *observation to intervention*
- *one Center to EC4*



Center 'Themes'

Oral health promotion & disease prevention

- In “non-dental care” settings
 - The ‘well-child’ medical care visit, in CHC
 - Public housing developments
- Delivered by “non-dental care” providers
 - Medical care providers (MD/NP/RN/PA)
 - Public housing residents - “*regular folks*”



Center Components

RPAC Co-PI's

Raul Garcia, DMD, and Michelle Henshaw, DDS, MPH

Major Projects and Co-PI's

“Partnering with Community Health Centers to Prevent ECC”

Judith Bernstein, PhD, and Paul Geltman, MD, MPH

Boston University Schools of Medicine and Public Health

Norman Tinanoff, DDS, University of Maryland Dental School

“Oral Health Advocates in Public Housing”

Michelle Henshaw, DDS, MPH, Boston University, and

Belinda Borrelli, PhD, Brown University School of Medicine



Center Partners

- Boston University Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine, School of Public Health, School of Medicine and BU-CTSI
- CDC Prevention Research Center – ‘Partners in Health and Housing’
- Community Committee for Health Promotion
- Boston Housing Authority
- Boston Public Health Commission
- University of Maryland Dental School
- Family Health Centers of Maryland
- Primary Care Coalition, Montgomery County, MD
- Nationwide Children’s Hospital, Columbus, OH
- National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research



'Keys to Success'

- Commitment to doing highest quality science
- Institutional support, and leveraging
- Multidisciplinary teamwork
- Integration of training and career development
- Broad dissemination of research findings
- Training the next generation of OHD scholars
- Commitment to translating science into *action*
- Engaging our communities

Boston Public Housing

- Largest landlord in Boston
 - Houses 26,000 low and moderate-income individuals
 - Rental assistance to another 25,000
- Community Health Centers
- Tenant Taskforces
- Resource & Development Centers
- Central administration and financing by a housing authority





Oral Health Disparities

- What we know: Racial and ethnic minority groups and individuals living in poverty are disproportionately affected by dental disease
- Boston Public Housing:
 - Median household income is typically well below the national poverty line
 - Of families with young children, 54% are Hispanic, 33% are Black, Non-Hispanic and 6.7% are White, Non-Hispanic



Oral Health and Public Housing

What we've observed:

- Healthy Baby/Healthy Child Oral Health Study
 - Clientele primarily public housing residents
 - 36% of children aged 0-3 had signs of ECC
 - 73% of mothers with untreated decay
- Boston modified BRFSS:
 - Residents have poorer health status for virtually all measures compared with non-residents, after controlling for SES
 - Residents more than twice as likely as non-residents to not have had a preventive dental visit



Oral Health and Public Housing

What we've observed:

- Residents have identified oral health as an issue:
 - Health questionnaire: “What personal health issues concern you the most?” (open ended)
 - 17% reported dental health
 - FISP Survey: “What health concerns do you currently have?” (close ended)
 - 55% reported dental health
 - 2nd highest below safety/violence (58%)

Community Engagement in Health Research



*Principles of Community Engagement
(Second Edition), 2011*

<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/>



Community Engagement in Health Research

- communities as ***valued members*** of the research team
- building ***stable infrastructure*** within communities, not only to ensure their capacity ***to participate*** in research but also to ***implement*** new knowledge in ways that will lead to ***better health outcomes*** and ***sustainable*** community change

From: <https://www.ctsacentral.org/>



Community Engagement in Health Research

... community engagement ultimately means *linking the work of everyone* – at multiple levels of research, medicine, public health and communities – to the *goal of improved population health outcomes*

From: <https://www.ctsacentral.org/>

Community Committee for Health Promotion

- independent organization comprised of residents of the Boston Housing Authority family developments, community leaders and BHA representatives
- board is comprised of 25 members, 13 of whom must be public housing residents





Oral Health Advocates in Public Housing

Co-Principal Investigators:

Michelle Henshaw, DDS, MPH

Boston University Henry M. Goldman
School of Dental Medicine

Belinda Borrelli, PhD

Brown University School of Medicine



Oral Health Advocates in Public Housing

Research question:

Does a behavioral intervention (Motivational Interviewing), delivered by public housing residents ('oral health advocates') to their peers, reduce incidence of early childhood caries over a two-year period?



Oral Health Advocates in Public Housing

Study Design

Stratified group randomized trial

Primary Outcome Assessment

2 year caries incidence



Oral Health Advocates in Public Housing

Enroll 1,860 caregivers and their children

- Site eligibility criteria:
 - Designated family housing development
 - Minimum of 40 families with children ages 0-5
 - Community room or development center
- Stratification factors:
 - Number of families with children ages 0-5
 - Age and race distribution of children
- 26 sites

Thank You!

