



POWER Pee Dee

Grant Period: 9/1/2018-8/31/22

Prioritizing the Oral Health Workforce and Education in Rural Pee Dee (POWER Pee Dee).



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POWER Pee Dee

Prioritizing the Oral Health Workforce and Education in Rural Pee Dee (POWER Pee Dee) is a MUSC subaward provided by grant funding through Human Resources and Administration Services (HRSA). The goals of POWER Pee Dee is to create a network of oral health champions working together to improve oral health outcomes amongst school-aged children in the Pee Dee.

Connections established by the Division of Oral Health through the introduction and creation of POWER Pee Dee include MUSC College of Dental Medicine, SC Office of Rural Health, SC Primary Care Association, SC Dental Association, SC DHEC State School Nurse Consultant, SC DHEC Pee Dee Region, USC Arnold School of Public Health Community Health Worker Institute, USC Arnold School of Public Health Core for Applied Research and Evaluation (CARE) Team, and Columbia Marionette Theatre.

POWER Pee Dee Highlights

BLUEPRINT FOR HEALTH COMMUNITY PROJECT

PEE DEE PREEVENTION PROJECT

ORAL HEALTH COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLES

LEE COUNTY COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS AND
EVENTS

ENHANCING OUR LIBRARY OF RESOURCES

NETWORK OF ORAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS

COMPONENTS CONTRIBUTING TO A SUCCESSFUL
REGIONAL ORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE



Blueprint For Health Community Project

Through established connections with MUSC School of Dental Medicine and the SC Office of Rural Health, the Division of Oral Health was invited to provide local oral health statistics from the 2017-2018 Statewide Oral Health Needs Assessment (OHNA) to the Marion County Coordinating Council (MCCC) to help inform the planning of Marion County's Blueprint for Health Grant Award through the SC Office of Rural Health.

After highlighting oral health needs within Marion County during the MCCC Blueprint for Health Grant Award meetings, MCCC leaders chose to focus their community project on oral health with an emphasis on the importance of "Oral Health for Total Health". The project's efforts included the creation of a Marion County Oral Health Forum for physicians, dentists, nurses, and community leaders. The Division of Oral Health collaborated with MCCC in creating the Marion County Oral Health Forum centered on delivering information to support the concept of medical dental integration to achieve "Oral Health for Total Health".

Through the Marion County Oral Health Forum, the Division of Oral Health was able to present and establish numerous connections.



Pee Dee Prevention Project

Results from the 2017-2018 Statewide Oral Health Needs Assessment (OHNA) uncovered evidence of high rates of tooth decay amongst children in several Pee Dee counties. To support prevention efforts, the Division of Oral Health created the Pee Dee Prevention Project serving 25 Elementary Schools and 17 Headstart Centers in Lee, Darlington, Marion, Florence, and Williamsburg Counties. The schools received oral health kits to serve over 9000 children. The kits contained oral health education and resources to maintain or adopt preventive oral health behaviors at home.

The kits for each school included tools to support a school nurse in conducting an oral health screening along with items to aid a school nurse or teacher in supporting oral health education in the classroom. Children also received oral health resources to take home including a smile bag with toothbrush, toothpaste, timer, and floss, along with laminated toothbrushing charts, and oral health booklets.

The kits for the Headstart Centers included educational resources for centers to use in the classroom and to educate families to improve oral health for children from birth to five years. To establish or reinforce good preventive oral health at home, children were also sent home with oral health resources.



During this process, the SC State School Nurse consultant assisted in establishing connections with:

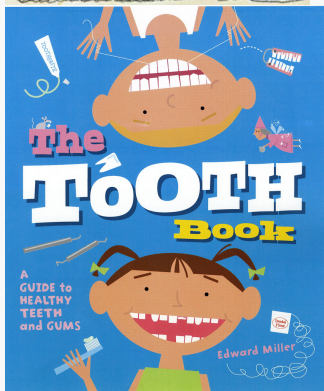
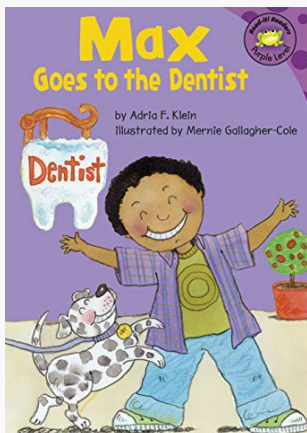
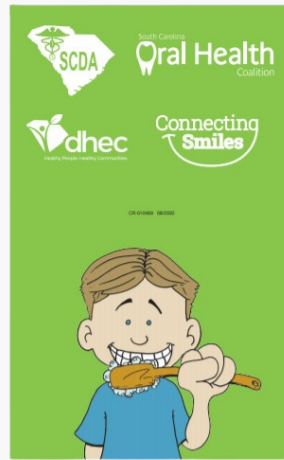
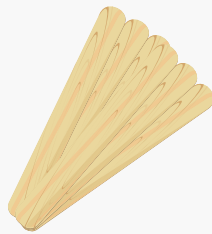
25 
SCHOOL
NURSES

6 
LEAD
NURSES

25 
SCHOOLS

17 
HEADSTART
CENTERS

Pee Dee Prevention Project Resources



I Brushed My Teeth

Monday	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tuesday	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wednesday	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thursday	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friday	<input type="checkbox"/>
Saturday	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sunday	<input type="checkbox"/>

2 minutes of tooth time...
 2 times a day!

MUSC Health
 Medical University of South Carolina

dhcc
 Healthy People. Healthy Communities

CR-012839 9/20

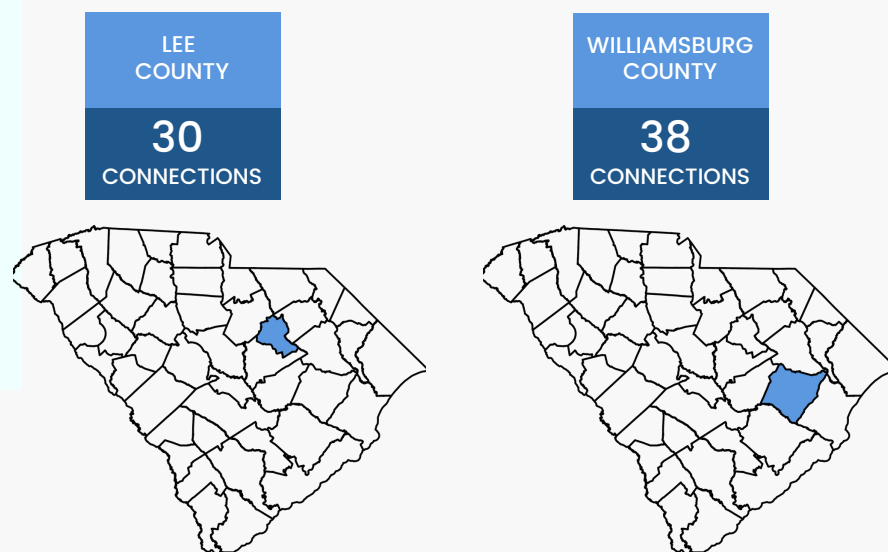


Oral Health Community Roundtables

Based on the recent SC DHEC oral health needs assessment data, children in the Pee Dee had more caries experience than any other region in the state with Lee County having a 63.83% rate of decay experience. In addition, only 28% of children in Lee County had dental sealants.

To continue increasing awareness and community linkages around oral health amongst community members and leaders in Lee and Williamsburg Counties, SC DHEC Division of Oral Health held two Community Oral Health Roundtables for Lee and Williamsburg counties.

The roundtables were facilitated by members of the CARE team and highlighted county-level data from the 2017-2018 OHNA and increased awareness about preventive measures, benefits, and resources within the community that could be leveraged to improve oral health outcomes. The roundtables provided the space for community stakeholders to share knowledge regarding local resources and identify individuals and organizations in the community to act as oral health champions further oral health awareness.



Lee County Community Champions

At the Oral Health Roundtables in Lee County, we gained the interest of a Lee County Councilwoman, Jacqueline Josey. Councilwoman Josey requested we support the community with additional information and increased awareness about oral health by hosting 3 Community Oral Health events involving 3 rural communities in Lee County. In planning these events, Councilwoman Josey engaged another Lee County Councilwoman, Councilwoman Caughman, to plan and support the events.

To promote the Lee County Oral Health events, the Division of Oral Health was invited to speak at a Lee County RLI/Interagency Coalition meeting. At this meeting, the Division of Oral Health presented information about the importance of oral health that included local statistics and available resources, and they also had the opportunity to promote and solicit support for the planned Community Oral Health Events to a large group of Lee County RLI/ Interagency Coalition members.



**161 community members reached in
Lee County**

Lee County Community Events

The Lee County Oral Health Events occurred in Lynchburg, Springhill, and Bishopville. The network of oral health champions increased again during the creation and planning of the Community Oral Health Events with 13 partners joining to host the event.

The SC DHEC Division of Oral Health, in collaboration with Lee County RLI/ Interagency Coalition, CareSouth Carolina, SC Oral Health Coalition, SC Dental Association, Lee County Council, Lee County First Steps, Diaper Day Giveaway Tour, SC DHEC Pee Dee Health Regions, Absolute Total Care, Molina, Healthy Blue, SC State 1890 Research & Extension Santee Wateree Region, the Coca-Cola Company and other Lee County organizations and stakeholders hosted 3 Community Oral Health Events to increase knowledge, awareness, and preventive behaviors surrounding oral health.

Activities at the events included a performance of the Columbia Marionette Theatre's production of Flora and Floppy go to the Dentist Puppet Show, ZUMBA®, food share box distribution, diaper day giveaway tour, oral health screenings, Covid-19 vaccines, snacks, and provision of educational oral health materials and resources.





Lee County Children's Dental Health Month

In addition to being invited to promote the Community Oral Health Events to Lee County RLI/ Interagency Coalition, Councilwoman Jacqueline Josey invited the Division of Oral Health to speak at a Lee County Council Meeting. The Division of Oral Health was again provided the opportunity to increase awareness regarding oral health, local statistics, and the Community Oral Health Events to community leaders. As a result of increased awareness about the importance of oral health and the tireless efforts of Councilwomen Josey and Caughman, the Lee County Council formally declared March 2022 as Lee County Children's Dental Health Month!

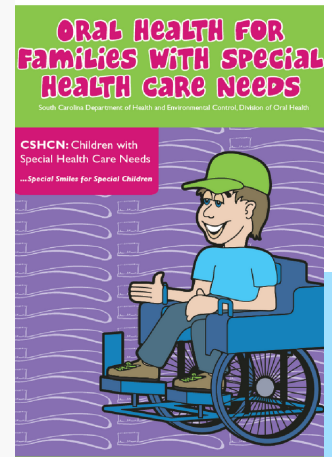
Enhancing Our Library of Resources

To continue providing up-to-date and evidence-based educational resources to children, adults, families, and communities, the Division of Oral Health created several new resources and updated some existing materials.

The “Flora and Floppy go to the Dentist” Puppet Show and Booklet were updated to reflect more current practices. In addition, short videos, addressing different oral health topics were created and performed by the Columbia Marionette Theatre. The videos can be easily accessed by teachers, nurses, and parents. Some of the titles for oral health issues addressed were “Our Teeth are Important”, “Never Fear the Dentist is Near”, “Two Minutes of Tooth Time, Two Times a Day”, “Uh Oh, I have a Sick Tooth”.

The Oral Health Standards-based Supplemental Curriculum was created as an adaptation of our original After Schoolers Oral Health Supplemental Curriculum. The curriculum was updated and informed by the SC Standards for Health and Safety Education to allow teachers increased use of this robust oral health curriculum in the classroom. In addition, the Oral Health for Families with Special Healthcare Needs booklet was revised and updated.

Lastly, the “Tools to Keep Kids Cavity-Free: Fluoride and Dental Sealants” rack card was created to provide parents a quick and easy guide regarding the use, efficacy, and ease of access of fluoride and dental sealants. The card can be easily distributed through schools, health centers, physicians’ offices, dentists’ offices, health events, community health workers, Head Start centers, and many other entities. By providing a quick glimpse regarding the ease in access and efficacy of fluoride and dental sealants, we hope more parents will speak to their pediatrician and dentist about receiving these safe and effective prevention tools.



Oral Health Standards-Based Supplemental Curriculum



Oral Health for Families with Special Health Care Needs Booklet



Tools to Keep Kids Cavity-Free: Fluoride and Sealants Rack Card

Components Contributing To A Successful Regional Oral Health Initiative

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

INCORPORATING A VARIETY OF EXPERTISE

STRONG COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY & CLINICAL
SECTORS

CHALLENGES MET & LESSONS LEARNED

CONCLUSION



Financial Support

Without appropriate funding, the initiative would not have had the opportunity to work with and positively impact communities in the Pee Dee. The Division of Oral Health received funding from MUSC as a sub-award from HRSA. The funding allowed for the creation of a Regional Oral Health Systems Coordinator whose focus was to develop a network of oral health champions in communities in the Pee Dee. These oral health champions were focused on improving oral health outcomes amongst school-aged children.

Incorporating A Variety Of Expertise

The project captured and merged the expertise of several entities through the organization of the Prevention Project, the Oral Health Community Roundtables, and Community Oral Health Events. This allowed for rich planning, engaging dialogue, and strong partnerships that led to positive outcomes. Project partners included the USC CARE Team, SC DHEC Pee Dee Region, SC State School Nurse Consultant, SC Division of Oral Health, MUSC College of Dental Medicine, Columbia Marionette Theatre, Lee County Council members, and other consultants.

Strong Community Engagement

Communities in the Pee Dee displayed strong connections and a high level of commitment and involvement in their communities. Several counties had existing coordinating councils or coalitions supporting a theme of collaboration and commitment to improving and strengthening the needs of the community. With an engaged community in place in many areas, partners were rapidly engaged, resources leveraged, and information diffused.

Engaging The Community & Clinical Sectors

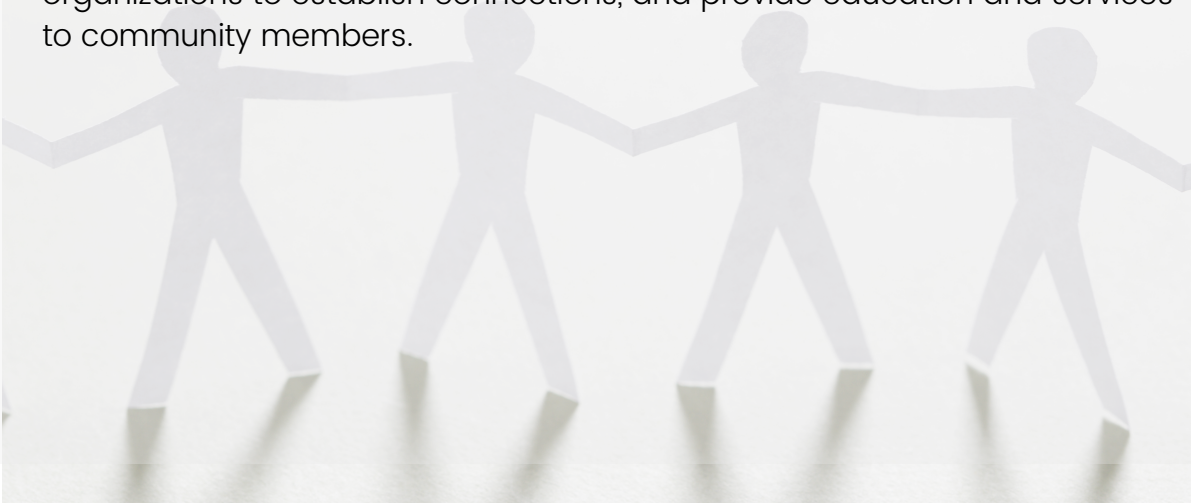
The Division was able to identify and reach key stakeholders, community leaders, and organizations through the guidance of existing partners of the division.

Engaging Leaders At The County Level

As previously mentioned, county council members attended Oral Health Community Roundtables and responded with interest and concern. Members reached out to the division to collaborate and bring awareness and oral health education to their community and to the county council members.

Community- Clinical Linkages

As recommended by the CDC in their guide, Community Clinical Linkages for the Prevention and Control of Chronic Diseases, engaging and connecting the Community Sector and Clinical Sector works to improve population health. During the Oral Health Roundtables and Community Oral Health Events, health professionals from hospitals, dentists' offices, physicians' offices, and FQHCs collaborated with the community sector to uncover community needs, leverage existing resources, identify additional organizations to establish connections, and provide education and services to community members.



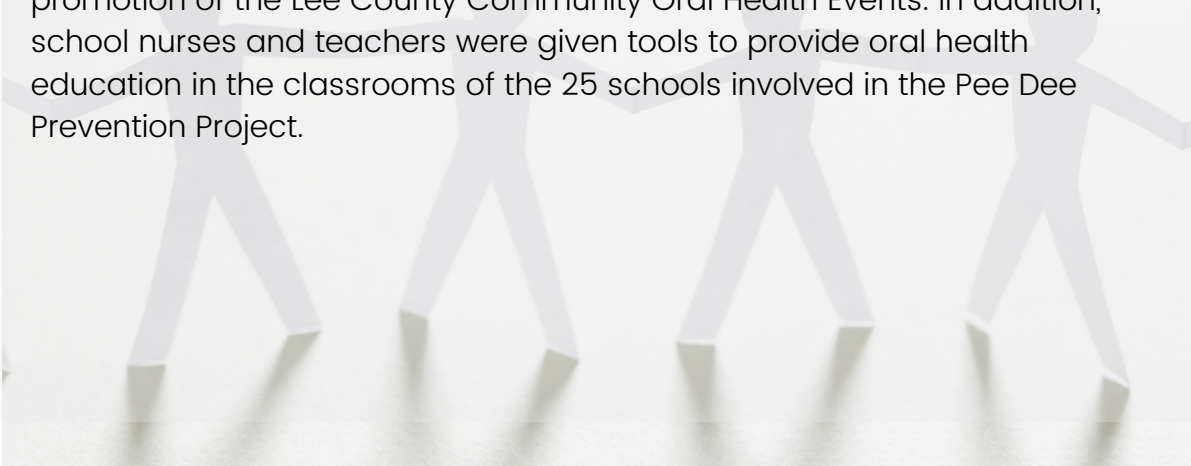
Engaging The Community & Clinical Sectors Cont.

Community Organizations

In addition, community organizations collaborated with the Lee County Council and the Division of Oral Health to host the Lee County Community Oral Health Events. Not only were community members provided access to a variety of health-supporting organizations at the oral health events, but hosting organizations were exposed to and learned more about oral health. We are hopeful those organizations are now oral health champions within the community, continuing to diffuse information as they meet and inform other individuals and organizations.

Support From School Administrators and Staff

From our experience, the most efficient way to reach school-aged children is through the public school system. For the Division of Oral Health to connect with schools, it was imperative to work with school administrators and school nurses. We were able to strengthen those connections through existing contacts such as our School Nurse Consultant and the ties established with County Council members. School administrators and school nurses assisted with the organization and disbursement of oral health resources during our Pee Dee Prevention Project and during our promotion of the Lee County Community Oral Health Events. In addition, school nurses and teachers were given tools to provide oral health education in the classrooms of the 25 schools involved in the Pee Dee Prevention Project.



Challenges Met & Lessons Learned

No Grant Funding For Community Projects

Initially, we worked to determine the best way to present information about the 2017-2018 OHNA to create awareness regarding the state of oral health in counties in the Pee Dee. We were concerned that without monetary support for communities to take action and work towards improving oral health at a local level, communities would feel powerless and unsupported. We were also concerned that without the availability of grant funding for community projects, communities would not have the needed resources to initiate oral health improvement.



While grant funding can be extremely helpful and invaluable in some situations, it isn't always feasible. Without additional funding to provide mini grants to communities for oral health projects, the Division of Oral Health planned Oral Health Roundtables to serve as a community think tank. By hosting roundtables at a county level, counties were provided the space for community members, leaders, and clinical professionals to come together and determine after hearing local data if the issue was something they would like to address, and if so, what assets and connections within the community could be leveraged to bring about change.



In addition to establishing linkages within the community, key leaders gained interest in the community's oral health and requested to collaborate in hosting community oral health events in their county to provide oral health education for community members. Through influential community members' established connections, community resources were leveraged for the events to take place. In planning the three events, event spaces, equipment, tables, chairs, food, time, labor, tents, and other items were donated to aid with the event.



Challenges Met & Lessons Learned Cont.

Viewing Oral Health As A Health Priority

Oral health is at times misunderstood and is often discounted as attributing to the body's total health. By gaining the interest of just a few key leaders in communities through the provision of oral health education and local statistics during the Oral Health Roundtables and Community Oral Health Events, oral health information diffused through diverse, influential channels increasing awareness and broadening the sometimes-narrow perspective of oral health.

COVID

The pandemic created a variety of issues throughout the POWER Pee Dee grant. During our Prevention Project, we were met with many challenges in getting thousands of oral health kits and educational materials to students that may or may not be attending school in person. In many scenarios, we were communicating with school staff by way of others including the State School Nurse Consultant, Lead School Nurses, and DHEC Regional Health Educators. We are incredibly grateful for these individuals. Without them, this project would not have taken place.

In addition, at the time the DOH staff were not working in the office due to Covid making it extremely difficult to obtain and box resources. We found that going and picking up the resources from the central office, boxing them at home, taking them back to the central office, and then mailing them was the safest thing to do. Schools and Head Start centers were also understaffed, reducing the availability of those that could assist in distributing resources and provide oral health in the classroom in the event students were attending in person. In the end, we are happy to report, all oral health kits were disbursed!

Covid also posed a threat to the viewing of our beloved oral health puppet show, "Flora and Floppy go to the Dentist". Many students were attending school virtually and the schools with in-person options had strict guidelines regarding outside organizations coming into the schools. This greatly impacted the ability of the puppet show to perform. While we prefer the puppet show to be live, to meet the challenge, the show was recorded to provide a virtual option allowing the show to continue. We are excited we are back to live performances, but we also now have the ability to extend our reach virtually when needed.

NETWORK OF ORAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS AND ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE LIFESPAN OF POWER PEE DEE



Through the use of a Regional Oral Health Coordinator, develop a network of oral health champions dedicated to addressing the oral health needs of a school-aged children in the Pee Dee.



MUSC COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE

✓ SC Office of Rural Health

✓ Marion County Coordinating Council

✓ Marion County Coordinating Council Blue Print for Health

✓ Marion County Health Forum and Presentation

PEE DEE PREVENTION PROJECT



✓ State School Nurse Consultant

25
Elementary
Schools

17
Headstart
Centers

Lee, Marion, Williamsburg, Darlington, and Florence County Schools and Lead Nurses, Teachers and Admin



SC DHEC PEE DEE REGION

30
Roundtable
Connections

LEE COUNTY

✓ Lynchburg Councilwoman

✓ Springhill Councilwoman

✓ Lee County Council and Presentation



SC DHEC PEE DEE REGION

WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY

37
Roundtable
Connections

✓ RLI/Interagency Coalition and Presentation

✓ Designation of Children's Oral Health Month

3
Community
Events

161
Community
Members
9
Community
Organizations

OUTREACH



✓ USC CARE Team

✓ Education and Outreach Specialist

✓ Supplemental Oral Health Curriculum Updated

✓ SC Dental Association

✓ Columbia Marionette Theatre

Flora and Floppy
Puppet Show
Updated

Oral Health
Video Shorts
Created



Conclusion

Undoubtedly the POWER Pee Dee Project positively impacted the Pee Dee region of South Carolina and increased awareness and community connections around oral health. The ability to adapt initial goals and activities within a challenging public health environment allowed the project to continue and to achieve success. The seeds for community engagement have been planted and a strong foundation has been laid. This will allow for even greater success in future initiatives that take place to address oral health in the Pee Dee region.

The POWER Pee Dee project was funded by MUSC James B. Edwards College of Dental Medicine through Grant #HRSA/ Bureau of Health Professions (T12HP28882) in collaboration with the Division of Oral Health, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control.