DENTAL HEALTH & PREGNANCY STUDY

STRAIGHT from the Baby’s mouth

A newsletter from the COHRA team at West Virginia University

2R01-DE014889 Factors Contributing to Oral Health Disparities in Appalachia.
This project is funded by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research/ National Institutes of Health

Dr. Mary Marazita, University of Pittsburgh, Principal Investigator; Dr. Daniel Mooney, West Virginia University, Principal Investigator; Dr. Betsy Forman, University of Michigan, Principal Investigator

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Eberly Distinguished Professor

Were you part of the 2002-2009 Dental Health in Families Study? We want to stay in touch!

Contact Cameron Randall, MS
WVU Doctoral Candidate, Clinical Psychology

Cameron Randall and Dr. Dan McNeil are completing a follow-up study on dental comfort and sensitivity

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Dr. Richard J Crout, DMD, PhD, Professor Emeritus
Dr. Crout was the WVU Director and then Principal Investigator of this grant, and the prior COHRA grant for several years. He retired in 2012 but continues to consult on the grant. We wish the best to him and his family in his retirement.
Research Update

In late November of 2011, the first two WVU Dental Health & Pregnancy participants walked through the doors of the Marshall County Health Department. Since that time, 369 women from throughout West Virginia have been involved in the project.

We’ve been privileged to watch these wonderful ladies progress through their pregnancies and thrilled to see their beautiful babies grow from precious newborns to precocious 2 year olds. We’re happy to report that as of December 31, 2014, we’ve had 84 mothers and 2 year olds who have completed the initial stages of the study.

Each participant’s hard work and enthusiasm in the study is going to go a long way towards improving the oral health of future generations living in Appalachia and elsewhere.

We’re well on our way to reaching our original goal of enrolling 500 pregnant women from West Virginia into the study. We’re also hard at work planning for the future, which will hopefully include continuing to follow our participants until their children are 5 years old. If you have been a participant in the study, please continue to keep us up to date with your most current contact information so that we can inform you about developments with the study.

COHRA’s work over the past decade has also resulted in a proposal for a new initiative to promote health in young people in our state. Excessive use of soda and other sugar-sweetened beverages is a major problem in West Virginia that contributes to dental problems, obesity, and other health issues. COHRA has partnered with various school systems, dental practices, and health departments to propose a project to reduce the use of SSBs among high school students. Working from a nutritional and dental literacy approach, the intent is to help these students learn about the calories in SSBs, their erosive effects on the teeth, and other health issues they may cause. This proposal by Dr. Dan McNeill at WVU with Dr. Mary Marazita at Pitt, working with collaborators at other universities, is to the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, one of the National Institutes of Health, to study the implementation of this approach over a five year period. The competition for grants such as this one is fierce, but we are hopeful that we will get positive news about it later in 2015!

Community Outreach

While we all love our day to day work with the WVU Dental Health & Pregnancy Study, our team really enjoys being able to participate in a variety of community events. One of our favorites is Kids’ Day. This outreach event, held each summer in downtown Morgantown, gives us a chance to provide oral health education, stay involved in our community, and have a lot of fun!

Kids’ Day 2014 was the last time that our former Program Coordinator, Tiffany Ngan, was able to attend as an official team member with us before she began dental school at WVU… which made the day even more memorable. We all had a great time speaking to everyone who stopped by our table, using our puppets to teach kids about brushing their teeth, and painting faces!

Staff Peek

Michael Law came onto the WVU Dental Health and Pregnancy Study team in April 2014 as the northern team’s Oral Data Collector. One of Michael’s concerns as a Dental Hygienist in the private sector was the rate which children in our great state were getting cavities. So when he was given the opportunity to come on board with the COHRA 2 team, he was excited to research why so many children are getting cavities at such a young age.

Michael and his wife Carol have a daughter Paisley, and a son Noah. The day Michael started on the job he and his wife found out they were pregnant with Noah and because of that, they were able to enroll in the study! Michael is not only excited to be collecting the data for this research but to also be a part of the family of all of our dedicated participants that are in the WVU Dental Health and Pregnancy Study.

It has been a joy to have Michael on the team and his enthusiasm and genuine kindness shown in and outside of the study. We are so happy to have him on board!

Contact Us

dentalhealthstudy.com

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We send a special thank you to all the women and facilities partnering with us throughout the state of West Virginia to make this research possible.