

Manitoba Dental Association's Free First Visit Program

Evaluation Highlights



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Canadian Dental Association (CDA) Position

- The CDA encourages dental assessments of infants within 6 months of the eruption of the first tooth or by one year of age
- At the first dental visit, the infant's risk of caries should be assessed and discussed with a parent or caregiver
- The goal is to have children visit the dentist before there is a problem



Free First Visit Program

- MDA's FFV Committee Members:
 - Dr. Lanny Jacobs
 - Dr. Charles Lekic (Chair)
 - Dr. Robert Schroth
 - Dr. Leon Stein
- FFV program launched April 1, 2010 for a three year initiative
- In 1993 the MDA first introduced the concept of a First Dental Visit program





Rationale for the FFV Program

- Too many children in Manitoba develop Early Childhood Caries (ECC) at a very early age
- Early visits are one way to help prevent ECC or identify it at an early stage before it becomes too serious
- Creates “dental homes” for young children
- Evidence from within Manitoba reveals that delayed first dental visits can increase a child’s risk for caries.
- Improves access to care



Evaluation Activities

1. Survey of Manitoba dentists on the FFV program
(Dentists' Opinions on the Free First Visit program)
2. FFV tracking form review
3. Focus group sessions with Manitoba dentists & parents/caregivers

The evaluation involves key partnerships with:
MDA, UofM, WRHA, and the Healthy Smile Happy Child initiative

Grant Team: Schroth, Edwards, Hai-Santiago, Ellis, Mohammed/Berg, Moffatt
MDA Sponsored BSc(Dent) Students: M Boparai & G Boparai
Operating Grant: The Manitoba Institute of Child Health



Dentists' Opinions on the Free First Visit Initiative



Dentists' Views on a Province-Wide Campaign Promoting Early Dental Visits for Young Children

Robert J. Schroth, DMD, MSc, PhD; Aaron B. Yaffe, BSc; Jeanette M. Edwards, BOT, MHA; Khalida Hai-Santiago, DMD; Marion Ellis, BScN, MN; Michael E.K. Moffatt, MD, MSc, FRCPC; the Manitoba Dental Association.

Abstract

Introduction: The Canadian Dental Association recommends that children have their first visit to a dental professional no later than 12 months of age. In 2010, the Manitoba Dental Association launched the Free First Visit (FFV) program to increase access to early visits in the province. The purpose of the study reported here was to survey dentists about their views on the FFV program and to gain an understanding of their attitudes and practice patterns relating to the oral health of infants and toddlers and first dental visits.

Methods: A survey was mailed to registered general and pediatric dentists in Manitoba according to a modified Dillman methodology. Dentists were asked about their views on the FFV, their knowledge of early childhood oral health and the timing of first dental visits. Descriptive statistics, bivariate analyses and logistic regression analyses were performed. A *p* value of 0.05 or less was considered significant.

Results: The overall response rate was 63.2% (375 eligible responses out of 593 surveys mailed). The majority of respondents were men (255/373 [68.4%]), and most respondents were general dentists (355/372 [95.4%]). A total of 63.5% (231/364) felt that the FFV program improved access to care, 64.6% (223/345) believed that public awareness of young children's oral health has increased, and 76.2% (266/349) thought that the FFV initiative should continue past the planned end date of March 31, 2013. On average (\pm standard deviation), respondents thought that the first dental visit should occur at 18.1 ± 10.0 months, but in their practices, they actually recommended a slightly older age (18.9 ± 10.4 months). Compared with results from a previous survey, conducted in 2005, dentists who responded to this survey recommended that children have their first visit at a significantly younger age. A greater proportion of dentists reported seeing children 12–23 months of age in their practices than in the past (81.9% vs. 73.7%).

Conclusions: A majority of dentists who responded to the survey approved of the FFV program and thought it should continue. Although these dentists recommended early first dental visits, the average age recommended by respondents was 6 months later than the target age of 12 months. It appears that, over time, dentists are becoming more aware of prevention and management techniques relating to infants and toddlers.

Methods

- 593 Surveys mailed to registered general and pediatric dentists
- 398 surveys returned (23 excluded for various reasons)
- Final sample included 375 dentists
 - 57.9% November 2011
 - 24.8% December 2011
 - 7.2% January 2012
 - 10.1% February 2012
- Overall response rate of 63.2%.



Methods

- Modified Dillman survey methodology
- Interview Questionnaire
 - Views on the FFV
 - Dentist knowledge
 - Early childhood oral health
 - Prevention and management of early childhood caries
 - Continuing education profile
 - Practice profile
 - Dentist profile



Results

Characteristics of Participating Dentists		Number of Respondents (%)
Sex (n = 373)	Male	255 (68.4)
	Female	118 (31.6)
Dental training (n= 367)	University of Manitoba	310 (84.5)
	Other Canadian or American University	31 (8.4)
	International-Trained	26 (7.1)
Type of license (n = 372)	General Practitioner	355 (95.4)
	Pediatric dentist	17 (4.6)
Main practice location (n=361)	Northern Rural	36 (10)
	Northern Urban	41 (11.3)
	Southern Rural	43 (11.9)
	Southern Urban	241 (66.8)

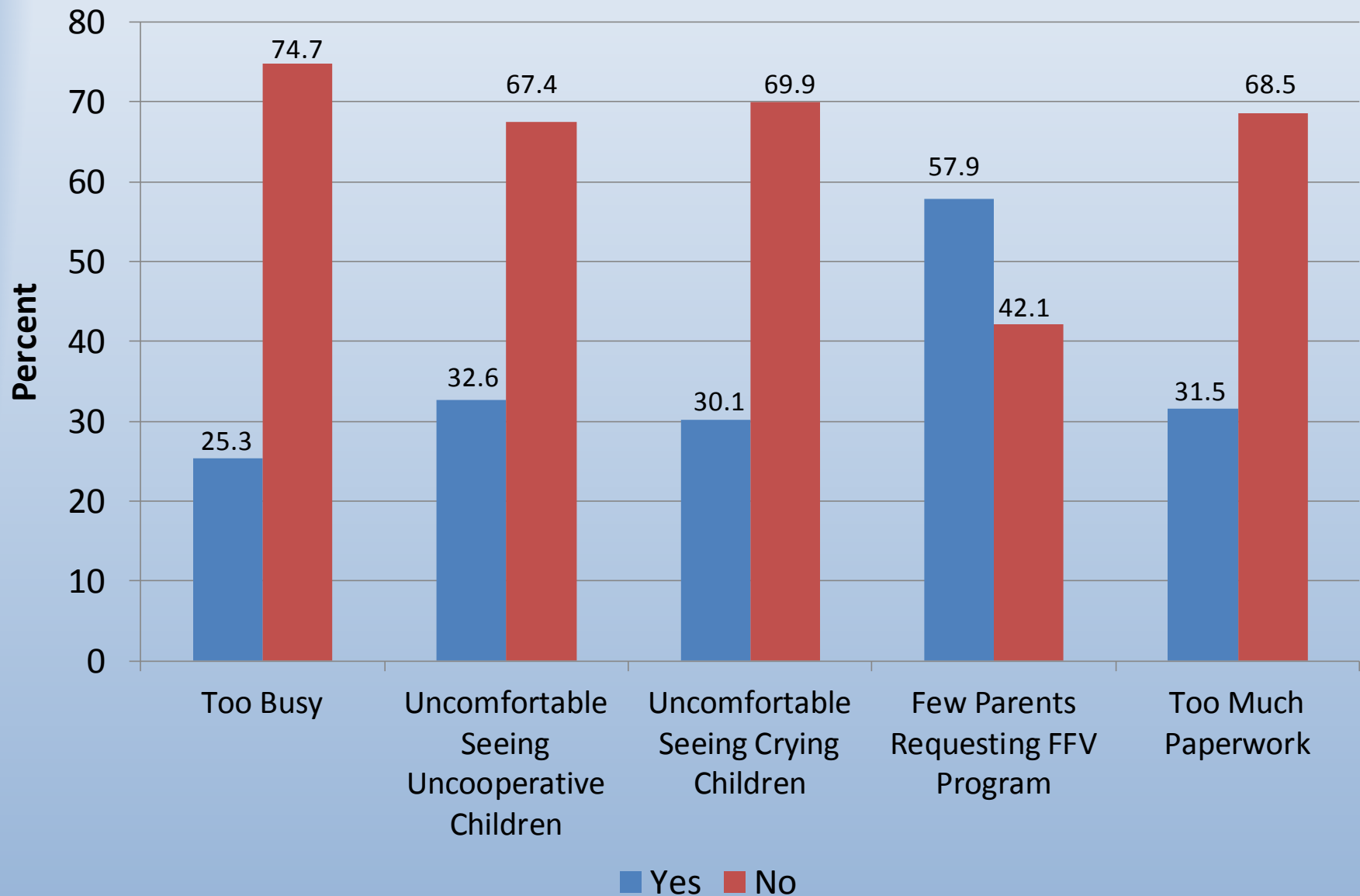


Dentist		No. of respondents (%)
Aware of FFV program (n=373)	Yes	<u>370 (99.2)</u>
	No	3 (0.80)
Registered participant in program (n=364)	Yes	<u>235 (64.6)</u>
	No	129 (35.4)
Has examined a child ≤ 36 months of age as part of the FFV program (n=277)	Yes	<u>250 (90.3)</u>
	No	27 (9.7)
Fills out the FFV tracking form (n=253)	Yes	107 (42.3)
	No	146 (57.7)
Believes FFV program improves access to care for young children (n=364)	Strongly agree	82 (22.5)
	Agree	149 (40.8)
	Neither agree nor disagree	98 (26.9)
	Disagree	30 (8.2)
	Strongly disagree	6 (1.6)
		<u>231 (63.3)</u>
		<u>36 (9.8)</u>
Believes FFV program improves access to care for young children (n=364)	General Practitioner Agree	<u>220 (63.4)</u>
	General Practitioner Disagree	127 (36.6)
	Pediatric Dentist Agree	<u>10 (58.8)</u>
	Pediatric Dentist Disagree	7 (41.1)



Dentist	Number of Respondents (%)
Believes FFV program has increased public awareness (n=345)	
Yes	223 (64.6)
No	122 (35.4)
Has received calls about the FFV program (n=353)	
Yes	160 (45.3)
No	193 (54.7)
Feels he/she is receiving enough progress updates on FFV program (n=346)	
Yes	290 (83.8)
No	56 (16.2)
Thinks FFV program should continue past March 31 st , 2013 (n=349)	
Yes	266 (76.2)
No	83 (23.8)
Treated children in FFV program who would otherwise be unable to afford necessary treatment (n=358)	
Yes	95 (26.5)
No	175 (48.9)
Not applicable	88 (24.6)

Reasons for Not Participating in the FFV





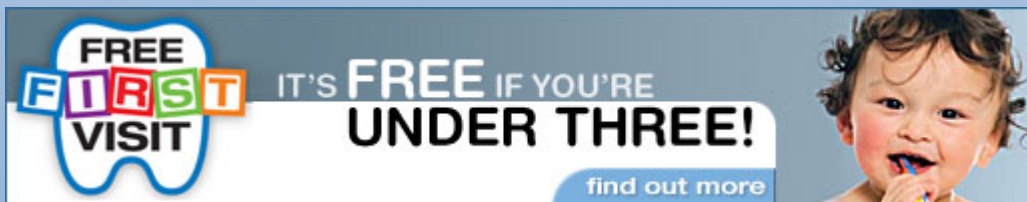
Variable	Present FFV Survey (%)	Past Survey of Manitoba Dentists ²¹ (%)	p value
Sex			
Male	255 (68.4)	182 (73.7)	0.16
Female	118 (31.6)	65 (26.3)	
Type of dental license			
General practitioner	355 (95.4)	240 (96.8)	0.40
Pediatric dentist	17 (4.6)	8 (3.2)	
Age child should receive his/her first dental visit? (months)	18.09 ± 10.0	22.9 ± 11.3	<.001
Age dentist personally recommends for first dental check up in their practice? (months)	18.9 ± 10.4	24.8 ± 10.9	< .001
Aware that dental organizations recommend a first dental visit as soon as the first primary tooth erupts and no later than 12 months of age			
Yes	316 (86.3)	144 (58.3)	<.001
No	50 (13.7)	103 (41.7)	

Conclusions

- Majority of dentists approve of the FFV program, and believe that the program:
 - Should continue beyond March 31st, 2013
 - Improves access to care
 - Has improved the public awareness of children's oral health
- Dentists are now recommending that children have their first visit at an earlier age than recorded during previous surveys
 - This figure is still 6 months later than the target age of 12 months

Acknowledgements

- MDA and MDA Free First Visit Committee
- Manitoba Institute of Child Health
- Team: Robert Schroth; Aaron Yaffe; Jeanette M Edwards; Khalida Hai-Santiago; Marion Ellis; Rafi Mohammed; Michael EK Moffatt
- Healthy Smile Happy Child Partnership
- Eleonore Klierer
- Jeremy Levi



Questions?

Free First Visit Tracking Form Evaluation

Team: Manpreet Boparai, Gurinder Boparai, Liping Zhang,
Miroslava Svitlica, & the MDA's FFV Committee

Date(DD/MM/YYYY):

MDA Free First Visit Program Tracking Form

Information about the Dentist

Name:

and

Location (City/Postal Code):

Office Stamp



Information about the Child

Patinet No.	Date of Free First Visit (dd/mm/yyyy)	Child's Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Child's Age (months)	Child's Sex	City of Residence	Child's Postal Code	Signs of Early Childhood Caries?	Dental Benefits?
1				M/F			Yes/No	Yes/No
2				M/F			Yes/No	Yes/No
3				M/F			Yes/No	Yes/No
4				M/F			Yes/No	Yes/No
5				M/F			Yes/No	Yes/No
6				M/F			Yes/No	Yes/No

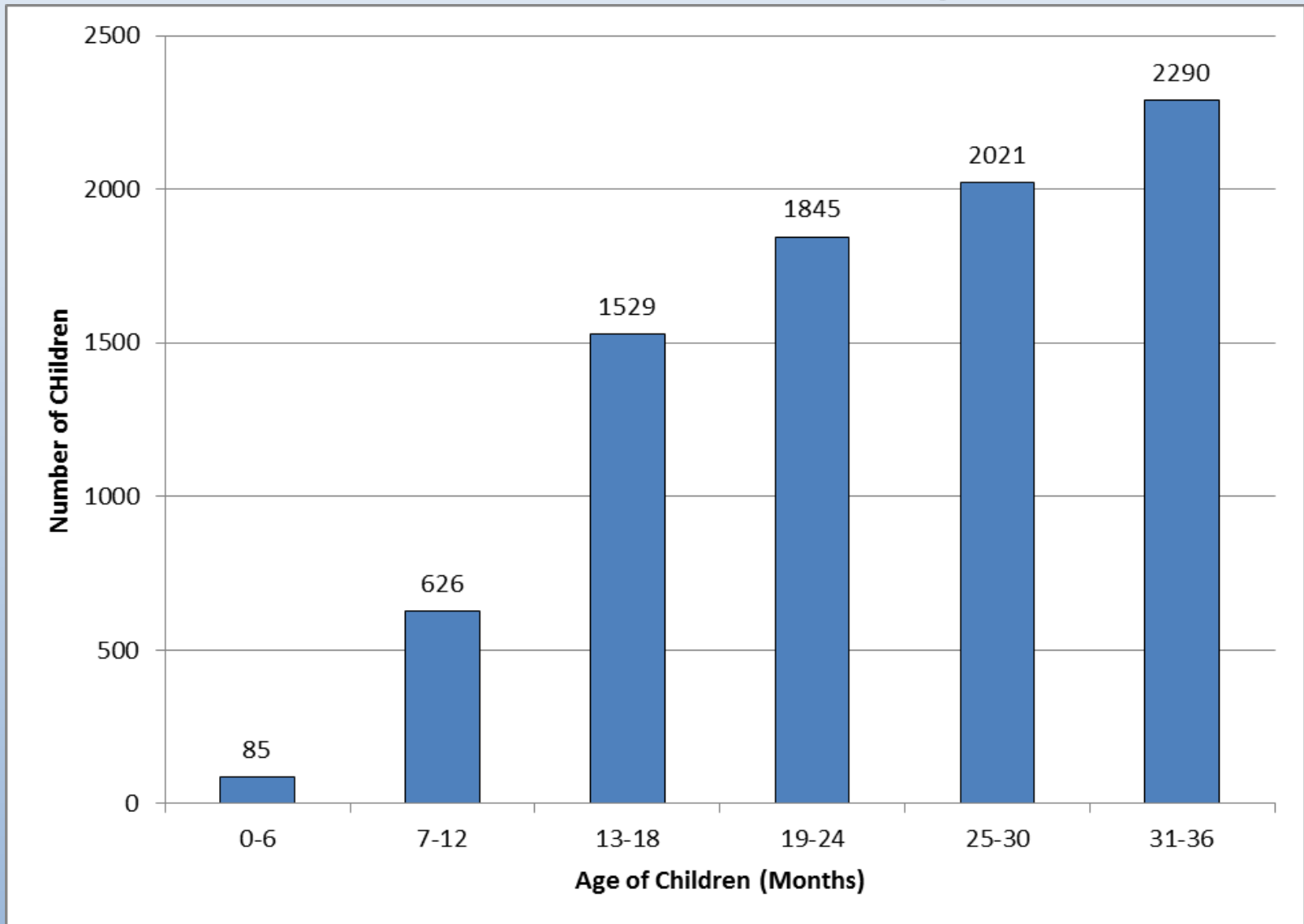
THANK YOU! We appreciate your time taken in completing this form. Please submit this information to the Manitoba Dental Association either by mail: 103-698 Corydon Ave, Winnipeg, Mb, R3M-0X9 or by fax: (204) 988-5310

Descriptive Findings – 24 month analysis (April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2012)

- 8,396 tracking forms for children ≤ 36 months of age were submitted
- The average age of children receiving FFVs was 24.2 ± 7.8 months (range 0.25 – 36.0 months)
- An even distribution of males (51.8%) and females (48.2%)
- Only 21.4% of FFV provided by general dentists; 78.6% provided by pediatric dentists
- 18% were reported to have ECC

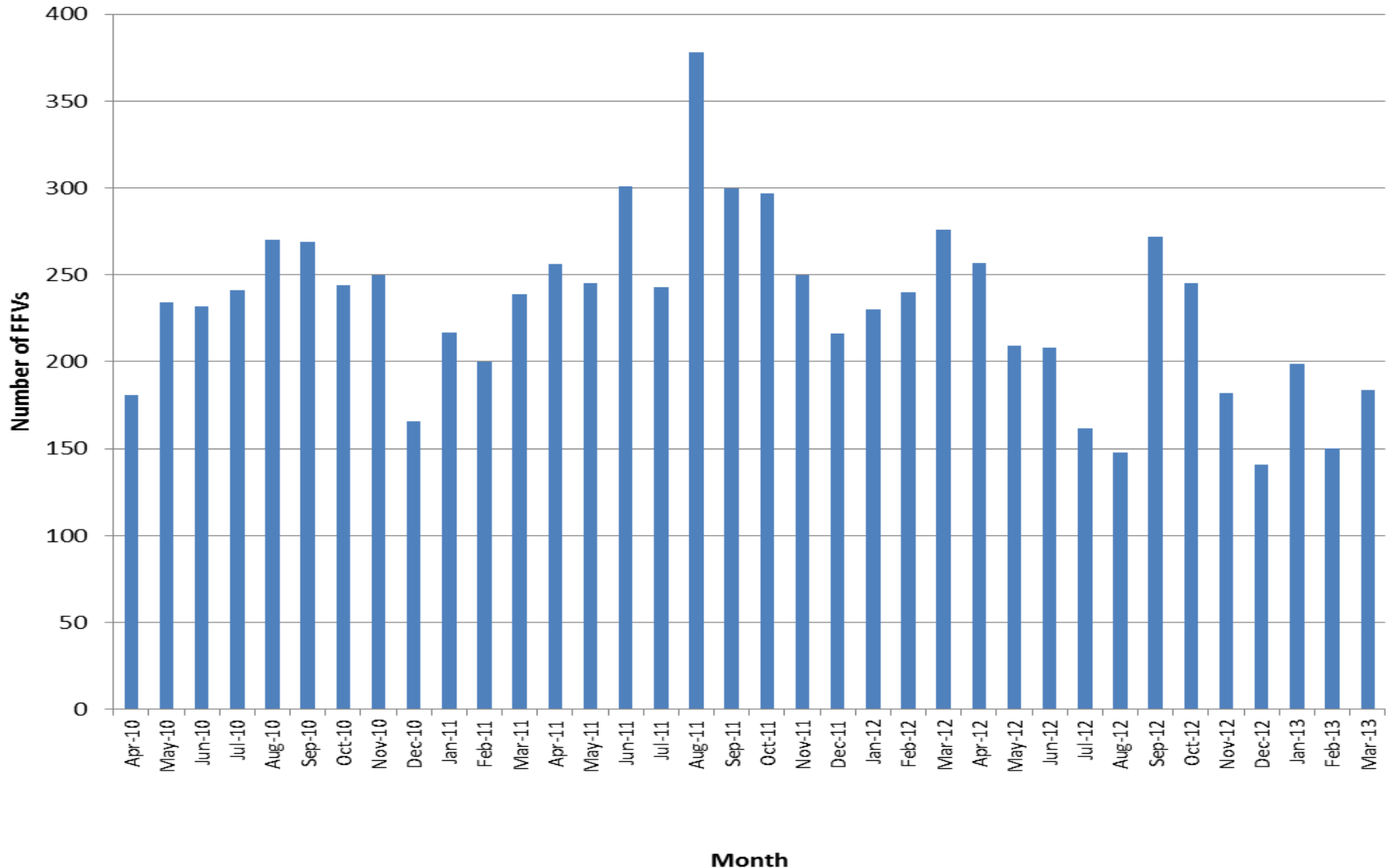


Distribution of FFVs by age of child



Nearly 1 in 4 children (26.7%) had a FFV by 18 months of age

Distribution of FFVs by Month

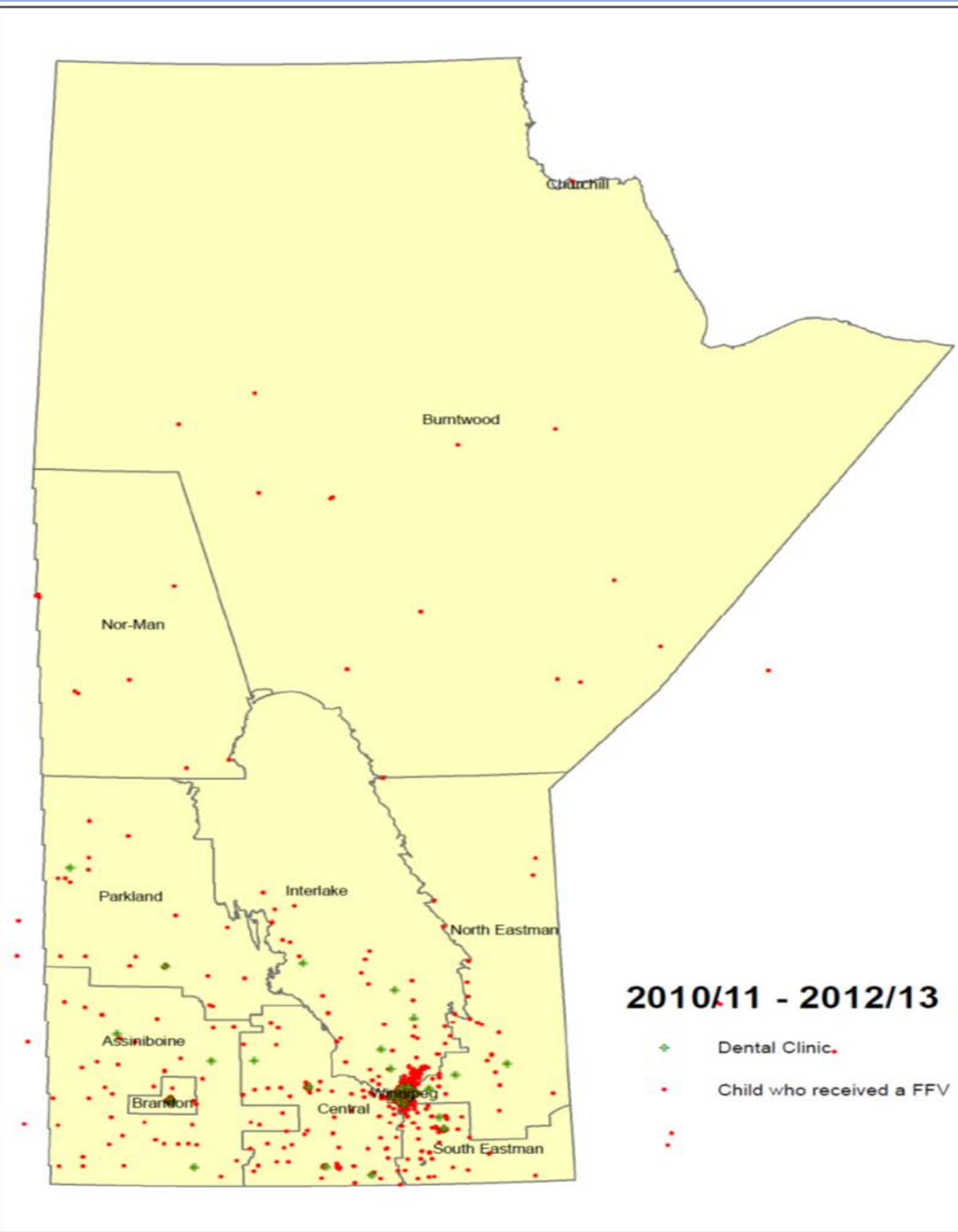


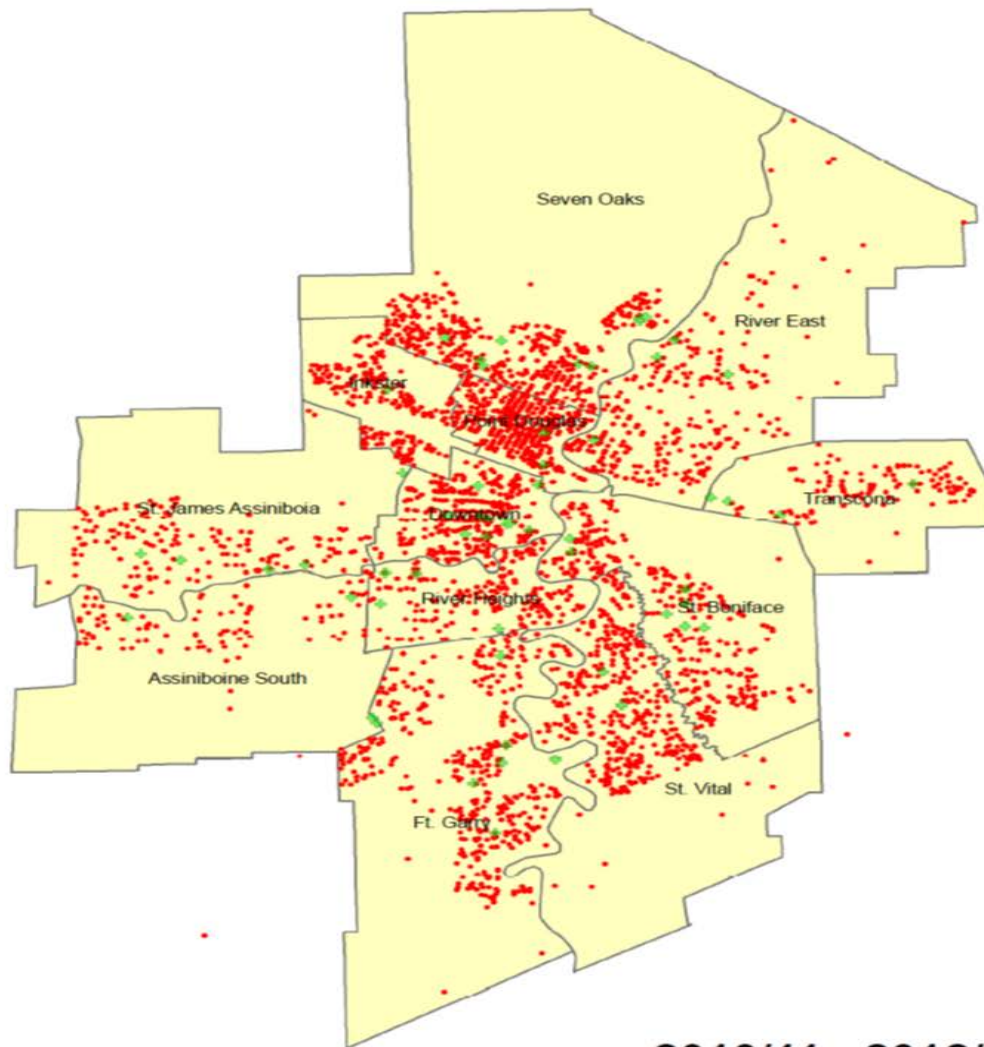
Monthly average = 231.4 ± 49.7 FFVs

Number of participating dental clinics and number of children by RHA

		Number of Children Seen by RHA of Residence					
Regional Health Authority (determined by postal code)	Number of Dental Clinics Submitting Tracking Forms	Fiscal Year 2010/11		Fiscal Year 2011/12		Fiscal Year 2012/13	
		# of Children	%	# of Children	%	# of Children	%
Winnipeg	82	1714	66.0%	2242	69.5%	1619	68.9%
Brandon	9	96	3.7%	75	2.3%	43	1.8%
North Eastman	6	93	3.6%	100	3.1%	75	3.2%
South Eastman	4	156	6.0%	188	5.8%	137	5.8%
Interlake	8	164	6.3%	205	6.4%	181	7.7%
Central	6	146	5.6%	197	6.1%	135	5.7%
Assiniboine	4	58	2.2%	58	1.8%	35	1.5%
Parkland	6	36	1.4%	45	1.4%	33	1.4%
Nor-Man		5	0.2%	6	0.2%	6	0.3%
Burntwood		24	0.9%	15	0.5%	12	0.5%
Churchill		1	0.0%	2	0.1%		
Missing postal code		105	4.0%	92	2.9%	75	3.2%
Total	125	2598	100%	3225	100%	2351	100%

Significant decrease in the mean age (24.7 ± 7.5 months [year 1] vs. 24.1 ± 7.9 [year 2] vs. 23.6 ± 7.9 [year 3], $p < .001$).



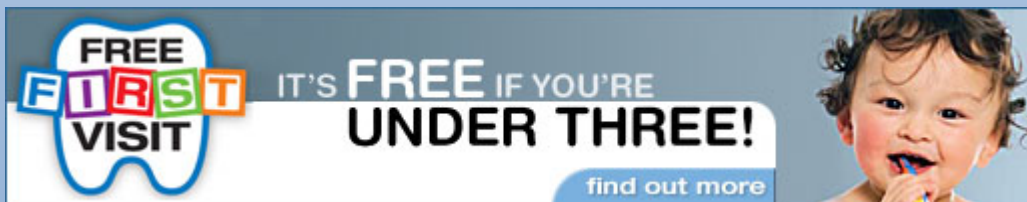


2010/11 - 2012/13

- ◆ Dental Clinic
- Child who received a FFV

Acknowledgements

- MDA and MDA Free First Visit Committee
- Manitoba Institute of Child Health
- WRHA Research & Evaluation Unit
- Healthy Smile Happy Child Partnership
- Manpreet Boparai
- Gurinder Boparai



Questions?

Focus Groups with Dentists and Parents



Objectives

- To learn the perspectives of dentists and parents on the FFV program



Methods

- Qualitative Study – Focus Groups
 - Semi-structured interview guide
 - Audio-recorded & transcribed
 - Thematic analysis of field notes and transcripts using N-Vivo 2



Dentist Sample

- 1 pilot interview + 3 focus groups during the MDA's conference in January, 2012
- 30 dentists
 - 24 participating in FFV; 6 not participating
- 23 general practice dentists; 6 pediatric dentists
 - 1/2 practiced in urban areas
 - 1/3 in rural areas
 - 15% in northern Manitoba

Dr. Gail Marchesseault

Parent Sample

- 3 focus groups June-August, 2012 in Winnipeg
- 21 participants
 - 16 mothers, 2 fathers & 3 grandmothers
- All participants caring for a child between 1 & 5 yrs old
 - 15 boys; 12 girls
 - Mean age: 3.08 years
- Dental coverage
 - 7 - Private dental insurance
 - 7 - Social assistance
 - 5 - Treaty status
 - 1 - No coverage
 - 1 - Unknown

Results

Dentists & Parents Valued FFV

- The FFV program was valued by the dentists and the majority of parents
- Dentists who participated in this evaluation supported continuation of the program
- Some parents recommended extending the program



Results

Reasons Dentists Participated

- Helped them to promote first visit before age one
- Opportunity to educate parents to prevent ECC
- Creates a dental home for children
- Increases children's comfort level with dental visits
- Good public health measure
- Good for professional image of dentists
- Coming with mother, so inappropriate to charge
- Already providing free visits, so just continued
- MDA program
- Parents requested it
- Attract new patients



Results

Reasons for Not Participating

- Patients already covered
 - ▣ Pediatric dentists: more kids & more problems
 - Loss of third party payments creates financial problems with no benefit to patients
- Offered free visits, not formally enrolled (forms)
- Practice limited to elderly
- Practice too busy to add more patients, especially those who cannot afford follow-up

Results

Campaign Messages

- **General Consensus:**
 - First visit by 12 months viewed as the most important message
 - “Free under 3” eclipsed “Come by 1”



- **Mixed opinions** regarding changing the cut-off age for free visits
 - Those wanting change satisfied if message reversed
- **Dentists recommended campaign focus on age one** as the appropriate age for a first visit
 - With free first visit as a secondary message

Results

Parent Awareness of FFV

- Dentists said parents lacked awareness of FFV & appropriate age for a child's first dental visit
- Almost all parent participants had heard of FFV, often in multiple ways:
 - bus ads, general advertising and word of mouth from other parents (mentioned in all focus groups)
- All but 6 parents said child should visit dentist after first tooth or by age 1
 - Some after-the-fact



Results

Parents' Reasons for Using FFV

- 11 of 21 parents had a FFV
 - Healthy teeth were important
 - Wanted child to feel comfortable with dentist, and
 - For some, to take care of a dental issue





Results

Using FFV cont'd

- Many participants said that free was nice, but they would have visited the dentist anyway
- Some commented that it helped defray costs at an expensive stage of life
- A few said they went earlier than they otherwise would have gone because
 - It was free
 - Learned the appropriate age for a first visit
 - Child was approaching the age three cut-off

Results

Reasons for Not Using FFV

- 10 parents had not used FFV
 - There was nothing wrong with the teeth
 - There was still time to make the visit
 - Other reasons: dental visits were already free, child's temperament or mother's mental state
- Some parents were uncertain about FFV's goals or how to find a participating dentist



Results

Incorrect Advice

- Five of 21 parents had been advised by their general practice dentist not to bring their child in for a check-up until age 3 or 4
- An additional parent had been told by age 2



Results

Dentists recommended

- Greater involvement of general practice dentists in screening pre-school children
 - Provide dentists with an information kit
 - Increase their awareness of minimal requirements for preschool exams if done in conjunction with a parent's visit, and
 - Include examinations for children less than 3 years of age in undergraduate training



Participants' Suggestions for Promoting Dental Care

Dentists'

- Involve the medical and nursing communities
- Promote at prenatal classes
- Post posters (with the age one message) where pregnant women and new moms will see them
- Distribute pamphlets in maternity wards with emphasis on age for first dental visit; and
- Discuss age for first visits with pregnant patients

Parents'

- Check-list for pediatricians and family doctors to follow-up with the dental check-up at six months
- Post-natal programs discuss the need for dental care
- Distribute FFV pamphlet in-hospital; and
- Distribute list of participating dentists by area of the city (printed)



Results

Access to Care

- Consensus among dentists FFV did not improve access to care (treatment) for disadvantaged families
 - NOT viewed as an appropriate goal for the FFV program
 - Wanted more information on free or reduced fee programs
 - Wanted new programs for families unable to afford treatment
- Dentists were also concerned about children in First Nations communities
 - Research to improve prevention and generate solutions
- Parents were mixed regarding whether FFV program helped those who needed it the most.
 - Recommended dentists go into daycares and schools in disadvantaged areas

Conclusions

- Unanimous support to continue the program
- **Dentists recommended focus on age one as appropriate age for visit with free first visit as a secondary message**
- Dentists recommended measures to increase general practice dentists' ability to work with young children
- Liaise with medical and nursing community to support & follow-up first dental visit

THE FREE FIRST VISIT PROGRAM CONTINUES

Manitoba Dentists have offered a child's first dental visit (prior to the age of three) at no charge through a program introduced in the early nineties and renewed three years ago. **Research about the program conducted recently has shown it to be highly successful.** Most Manitoba dentists offer the Free First Visit and the profession is held in high regard by grateful parents as a result.



Significantly, public acceptance that a child's first dental visit should take place prior to their first birthday is growing. Old paradigms are changing. Parents are becoming aware of the benefits of establishing an early start to their child's professional dental care.

Based on encouraging research results and **the benefits to both the public and the profession, the program will continue.** In response to the research there will be emphasis on the recommendation that the first visit take place prior to the child's first birthday, even though it will be available for free until their third birthday. New creative materials to help you promote the program are in development.

All Manitoba dentists are encouraged to participate in this worthwhile program.

The Manitoba Dental Association maintains a database of dentists taking part in the Free First Visit Program as a reference for public enquiries. **Please let the MDA office know if you have chosen NOT to participate.** Your practice may not be child oriented or you may choose to not see children this young. If so, please remember that as with any other treatment or procedure that your patient might require but you do not offer, kindly arrange a referral to a colleague.

For more information on the program or to advise of opting out, please contact:

Linda Berg, Director of Public & Member Relations

Manitoba Dental Association

202 - 1735 Corydon Ave / Winnipeg, MB / R3N 0K4

Phone: 204-988-5300 Ext 3

Email: lberg@ManitobaDentist.ca

www.ManitobaDentist.ca

**Preliminary Concepts for the
Manitoba Dental Association Free First Visit Program
Re-Branding 2014**
December 2013



Current/Latest Messaging

- 1)- **COME BY ONE.** (Dr.Schroth's working line)
- 2)- **BABY'S FIRST CHECKUP SHOULD BE DONE BY (AGE) ONE.**
- 3)- **BABY'S FIRST TOOTH MEANS BABY'S FIRST VISIT TO THE DENTIST.**
- 4)- **CELEBRATE BABY'S FIRST TOOTH WITH BABY'S FIRST CHECKUP.**
- 5)- **WHEN BABY'S FIRST TOOTH STARTS TO SHOW IT'S TIME TO GO.**
- 6)- **YOU NEED TO KNOW, AS BABY TEETH GROW, YOU'VE GOT TO GO.**
- 7)- **WHEN BABY'S FIRST APPEARS THERE, IT'S TIME TO GET IN THE CHAIR.**

Acknowledgements

- MDA & the MDA FFV Committee
- Manitoba Institute of Child Health
- Team: Robert Schroth; Gail Marchesseault; Sarah Prowse; Jeanette M Edwards; Khalida Hai-Santiago; Rafi Mohammed; Michael EK Moffatt
- Healthy Smile Happy Child Partnership
- Manitoba Medical Service Foundation & Manitoba Health Research Council

Questions?