

## Ideas for Easy-to-Do Activities

**1. 2012 “Rock Your Smile” Contest.** In honor of this year’s NCDHM campaign slogan, “Rock Your Smile,” encourage students to develop their own song, rap, or musical number using the Rock Your Smile theme/slogan.

**2. Sponsor a coloring contest.** This planning guide contains coloring and activity sheets that may be duplicated for a contest. Contact administrators of local childcare centers and elementary schools to encourage school participation. In the past, some dental societies have offered contest winners a savings bond, gift certificate or tickets to sporting events, concerts or the movies.



**3. Sponsor a dental health poster contest.** Select a poster slogan and choose a grade level to target. Determine where to display the posters, who will judge them and what you’ll provide as the award. You may wish to use the NCDHM theme: “ROCK YOUR SMILE.” Contact local schools and prepare and distribute poster guidelines. Consider reproducing the winning poster art on a free bookmark made available at libraries.

**4. Sponsor a dental health essay contest.** Essay contests encourage originality and are challenging for older children. To conduct a school contest, contact the school nurse, health or physical education instructor or the school administrator. Invite children or teens to write a persuasive essay on a dental topic, such as diet and soft drinks, or cleaning teeth, etc. Encourage children to visit [ada.org](http://ada.org) to research their topic. Define contest rules (such as age/grade, number of words or paragraphs, deadline, prizes, and where to submit the entry). Take a photo of the winner(s) and, with their permission, send it to local papers with an announcement.

**5. Offer school presentations.** A classroom visit is the cornerstone of many NCDHM programs. Choose your target audience: preschool, elementary or high school. Contact the school nurse, health or physical education instructor or the school administrator to make arrangements. You may wish to solicit corporate donations of toothbrushes, toothpaste or dental floss. For presentation ideas, see: [ADA.org/ncdhm](http://ADA.org/ncdhm)

**6. Sponsor a display or exhibit at the local library or museum.** Dental societies often display NCDHM posters, simple dental messages, photos of children receiving oral health exams, dental equipment, dental care products and models or charts of the mouth in educational displays. Contact the library or museum administrator several months in advance.

**7. Create an oral health bulletin board.** A simple bulletin board with brochures, tips, health messages and a list of resources or referrals is a simple way to promote oral health at schools, libraries, clinics and community centers.

**8. Conduct a dental health screening.** Schools, clinics, churches and community centers are good places to hold dental health screenings. Once the details are confirmed (who, what, when and where), announce the screening in a press release to local newspapers, radio and television stations. Provide children with oral health “report cards” that they can take home.

**9. Participate in a health fair.** Your local mall, community centers, hospitals, schools, park districts, clinics and banks are good locations for small health fairs. Approach a local business, hospital or clinic to co-sponsor a community health fair. Dental health exhibits can feature posters, mouth models, literature and hands-on demonstrations. Show a dental health video for children. Offer a toothbrush trade-in or provide visits with the tooth fairy or local dental society mascot if you have one.

**10. Give a talk at a community center.** Some shopping malls and banks have space set aside for community use. Contact the management office to make arrangements and to publicize the presentation. Talks can be geared to children or adults. Some groups use DVDs or videotapes, hand puppets, tooth costumes and mouth models for presentations. Distribute brochures or activity sheets that promote children's oral health. This Program Planning Guide contains activity sheets that can be duplicated and used as hand-outs.

**11. Work with community and civic groups.** Offer presentations about children's oral health to local groups like the Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions' Clubs, women's clubs, and local businesses (supermarkets, pharmacies, etc.).

**12. Reach out to youth groups with dental career information.** The Scouts, YMCA, 4-H, Future Farmers of America, and other groups have young members who can distribute dental health materials, benefit from programs and screenings, and assist in various phases of implementing your NCDHM activities. Information on dental career resources may be found in this kit. Also check the ADA's web site, **[ADA.org/391.aspx](http://ADA.org/391.aspx)**

**13. Reach out to parents.** Reach parents by speaking at childbirth classes and parent-teacher organization meetings. Provide new parents with dental health packets (literature, bib and gauze) for newborns. Distribute pamphlets and posters to obstetricians and pediatricians for use in reception areas. This is a good way to reach parents and enlist support from other health-care professionals.

**14. Work with the local chapter of the American Cancer Society.** Conduct tobacco cessation presentations; create a display for high school students. Contact the American Cancer Society (ACS) at 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit the ACS web site at <http://www.cancer.org> for more information or to find a local ACS chapter.

**15. Ask dentists and pediatricians to promote NCDHM.** NCDHM messages on recall notices, statements and answering machines are just a few of the ways that health professionals can give oral health pointers to patients. Ask them to hang up NCDHM posters in their waiting and exam rooms.

**16. Contact hospitals, public service organizations and businesses.** These organizations may use oral health messages, announcements and events in their newsletters, bulletin boards, web sites, electronic signs or mailings.

**17. Get in the news.** NCDHM Programs can send out press releases to local newspapers, radio and television stations. Contact the local PTA or PTO and offer to submit an article about children's dental health for their newsletter. Do this before and after events. If you have photos of health fairs, school presentations, screenings, sealant applications, etc., you can send them with a press release or a simple note to the editor for additional coverage. Visit the NCDHM website at **[ADA.org/ncdhm](http://ADA.org/ncdhm)** for sample press releases and articles.