

Integrating Health Standards into Colorado's Universal Preschool - Updates from the HUPC Project

As Local Coordinating Organizations (LCOs) prepare for the July 2025 implementation of Colorado's Healthy Development Quality Standards, the [Healthy Universal Preschool Collaborative](#) (HUPC) is partnering with 6 communities and 11 counties to integrate oral health education and activities as well as screenings and referral in Colorado's Universal Preschool (UPK) settings. The HUPC offers valuable insights and practical strategies for integrating health services – particularly oral health and developmental screening – into Universal Preschool (UPK) programs.

Funded by the Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation, the HUPC project unites six local coordinating organizations (LCOs) with support from [Assuring Better Child Health and Development](#) (ABCD) and [Healthy Child Care Colorado](#) (HCCC). Their community-driven approach leverages community-based Co-Design Teams, which brings together educators, healthcare professionals, and local stakeholders to shape effective solutions tailored to their communities.

Key Implementation Strategies

Within the first year, the HUPC has identified two key strategies that LCOs can adopt to improve oral health education, along with screening and referral activities for child oral health, development, vision, and hearing:

1. **Establish a Strong, Community-based Co-Design Team:** A successful health integration model starts with collaboration. The HUPC project emphasizes:
 - a. **Recruit diverse stakeholders** including educators, healthcare professionals, and community members to work together
 - b. **Analyze local landscapes** using data to identify existing resources and gaps related to screening and referral processes.
 - c. **Develop customized screening and referral policies** and procedures to align with both community needs and state requirements.
2. **Provide Comprehensive Resources:** LCOs participating in the HUPC have access to a variety of resources to support co-design teams and to streamline oral health, screening and referral integration:
 - a. **Professional Development Tools:**
 - i. Training modules on co-design methodology
 - ii. Guidance for oral health integration in UPK programs

- iii. Step-by-step implementation guides for screening and referrals
- iv. Access to the Cavity-Free Kids (CFK) online course (*Launching February 2025, available in English and Spanish on [Colorado's Professional Development Information System](#)*)

b. Data Management Resources:

- i. Community data snapshots to inform decision making
- ii. Activity tracking tools for monitoring health screenings and referrals

c. Family Engagement Materials:

- i. Guidance for building resource and referral lists tailored to families and local needs
- ii. Documenting referral policies and procedures
- iii. Communication tools to support engagement

Proven Success Metrics

The HUPC model has demonstrated significant impact, providing a roadmap for other LCOs to follow:

- **75+ community stakeholders engaged** in Co-Design Teams
- **100+ UPK programs serving 1500+ children** are actively participating across various settings - including home-, center-, and school-based sites
- **20+ [Child Care Health Consultants](#)** are committed to working with LCOs and UPK programs to conduct oral health screenings using new screening tools developed by the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE)
- **6 LCOs** serving **11 rural and urban counties** are driving implementation

These early successes highlight the scalability and effectiveness of this approach in supporting healthy child development in Colorado's Universal Preschool Programs.

Looking Ahead: A Model for the Future

As Colorado's Universal Preschool continues to expand, the HUPC project offers a replicable model for integrating health services into early childhood education. By prioritizing collaboration with Child Care Health Consultants and community-driven solutions, the initiative is helping programs meet new state requirements while improving health and learning outcomes for young children.

LCOs interested in learning more or replicating the HUPC model can contact Lorendia Schmidt with ABCD to learn more: lorendia@coloradoabcd.org