



Public Health England dental public health epidemiology programme

Oral health survey of 3-year-old children 2019 to 2020

Dental health surveys involving children have been carried out across the UK since 1987. The information arising from them allows NHS England area teams to plan dental services and health improvement teams to tailor programmes for groups where oral health is poor. The overall aim is to support actions to improve oral health, reduce health inequalities and improve the provision of treatment services.

Local fieldwork teams from community dental services usually carry out these surveys. As with all NHS employees the teams are covered by the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulations and take confidentiality very seriously. National and regional training is provided to ensure that high standards are kept and all teams work to the same level at all stages in the survey.

Fieldwork teams will contact randomly sampled nurseries and playgroups within a local authority area. They will ask for cooperation from the site and for access to lists of all children who may be included in the survey, showing dates of birth. From these lists they will identify children who will be the correct age on the day of examination. Explicit, written consent will then be sought via letters home to parents, which the team will provide. The ethnic classification and home postcode of consented children will be requested from site information.

On the day of examination the team will set up their mobile equipment at an agreed location at the site and undertake brief examinations of the consented children's teeth. These examinations take no more than a minute and, as the teams are child friendly, should cause no discomfort or distress.

The information relating to the dental examination is recorded without names, gender or complete dates of birth. All data is kept securely and datasets are safely sent to regional centres for uploading via a secure web portal to the national coordinating centre. This centre collates data from all over England and produces reports on levels of dental health for England as a whole and at a variety of local government and health organisation levels. At no point is any individual identifiable, as the data is anonymised from the examination stage and only ever reported or published as grouped data.

It is hoped that all sites contacted will be able to assist the fieldwork teams in this national survey which local authorities have a responsibility to procure by law. The teams try to keep disruption to a minimum and ensure the children involved have a positive experience with the dental team.

Q What is the survey about?

This year surveys are being carried out across England to find out more about dental health among 3-year-old children. The information will be used to plan local dental health services in the future. Parents of children attending your child's playgroup or nursery are being asked if they would agree to their child taking part by signing the form and returning it. Participation is voluntary, although if lots of children take part then the information is more accurate.

Q Why your help is important

The survey will produce much better information if lots of children take part. It doesn't matter what their dental condition is like, we need to include those with big and little problems, those with perfect

teeth and those with not-so-perfect teeth, those who attend their own dentist and those who don't. The examining dentists just want to record what they find.

Q Who is running the survey?

An NHS dental team, including a fully qualified dental clinician, who is trained and experienced in carrying out surveys of dental health of very young children. The survey is being coordinated by Public Health England (PHE).

Q Who is being asked to take part?

All or some children at your child's nursery or playgroup who will have had their third birthday by the time the survey team visit will be asked to take part.

The childcare site has been selected at random from a list of all playgroups and nurseries in the area and they have kindly agreed to host the survey team.

Q What are volunteers being asked to do?

The children will be asked to have a very simple and quick dental examination at their nursery or playgroup. The dental clinician and an assistant who are trained to do this work will only do a simple examination. No treatment will be provided. The dental clinician will use fresh disposable gloves and sterilised mirrors for each child. The check takes only a few minutes and we will let you know if we find anything wrong. We would be pleased to see you at the examination if you would like to be present.

This examination cannot be as thorough as the one done by your own dentist so parents should still take their children for regular check-ups with their own dentist.

Q Can I withdraw my child from the study at any time?

You are free to withdraw your consent at any stage before the examination by contacting the playgroup or nursery and you do not need to give a reason for withdrawing. As the study is anonymous we will not be able to identify your child's information, so you can't withdraw it later on.

Q Who will use the results?

The results will be grouped together by PHE who will write a report which will be used by a range of people to help with their work. This will include the NHS to help with local planning of treatment services and local authorities to support their responsibility for monitoring the health, including oral health, of their local population and the Department of Health and Social Care.

A number of other government departments and agencies may also use the results. Survey information may also be shared with researcher partners who are viewed by PHE as fit to carry out suitable research.

Publications based on the data will be made available on the Gov.uk website and might be published in journals from Spring 2021. You can see the results of similar surveys on this website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/oral-health#related-intelligence>

Q Is the survey confidential?

Yes, the information you give us will be treated as strictly confidential as directed by the Code of Practice adopted by the NHS and the General Data Protection Regulations, 2018, and will only be used for statistical research purposes.

The information about your child will be stored in a computer file which will be password-protected and only dental staff and Public Health England staff will have access to it. No names or addresses will be recorded on the survey forms, just a postcode and a code for ethnic group.

The information will be used to produce statistics that will not identify any individuals; instead information about groups of people will be reported. Survey information is also provided to other approved organisations for statistical purposes only. All such statistics produced are subject to similar codes and the same standards of protection are applied to your information at all times.

The consent forms and all other data will be securely transported and held by the survey team who will be the only people who will have access to it. As soon as the survey results are published the consent forms and other data will be securely disposed of by survey teams who are used to dealing with such information.

Please see this short film which shows parents what happens on examination day and explains why it is important that they support the survey by returning their child's consent form:

<https://youtu.be/BzrjK8HRpD8>

**National Dental Epidemiology Programme
Dental health survey of 3-year olds 2019 to 2020**

Please will you help with a survey of child dental health?

We are asking parents of 3-year-old children to agree to their child taking part in this national survey. You are being asked to sign the form below and return it to your child's nursery or playgroup to show you agree to your child having a very quick examination of their teeth there. This is to collect information about whether dental health is improving in this age group and to allow different areas to be compared.

The information about your child will be stored in a computer file which will be password protected and only dental staff, Public Health England staff and authorised users will have access to it.

All children should be taken to their own dentist for check-ups, advice and care.

Please complete appropriate boxes below:

I have read and understood the information in the leaflet for the above survey and I have had the opportunity to consider the information

Child's Full Name			
Date of Birth			
Postcode			
Ethnicity <i>e.g; White British</i>			
		Yes	No
I agree to my child taking part in the dental survey			
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian		Date:	

Q What is the survey about?

This year surveys are being carried out across England to find out more about dental health among 3-year-old children. The information will be used to plan local dental health services in the future.

Parents of children attending your child's playgroup or nursery are being asked if they would agree to their child taking part by signing the form and returning it. Participation is voluntary, although if lots of children take part then the information is more accurate.

Q Why your help is important

The survey will produce much better information if lots of children take part. It doesn't matter what their dental condition is like, we need to include those with big and little problems, those with perfect teeth and those with not-so-perfect teeth, those who attend their own dentist and those who don't. The examining dentists just want to record what they find.

Q Who is running the survey?

An NHS dental team, including a fully qualified dental clinician, who is trained and experienced in carrying out surveys of dental health of very young children. The survey is being coordinated by Public Health England (PHE).

Q Who is being asked to take part?

All or some children at your child's nursery or playgroup who will have had their third birthday by the time the survey team visit will be asked to take part. The childcare site has been selected at random from a list of all playgroups and nurseries in the area and they have kindly agreed to host the survey team.

Q What are volunteers being asked to do?

The children will be asked to have a very simple and quick dental examination at their nursery or playgroup. The dental clinician and an assistant who are trained to do this work will only do a simple examination. No treatment will be provided. The dental clinician will use fresh disposable gloves and sterilised mirrors for each child. The check takes only a few minutes and we will let you know if we find anything wrong. We would be pleased to see you at the examination if you would like to be present.

Q Can I withdraw my child from the study at any time?

You are free to withdraw your consent at any stage before the examination by contacting the playgroup or nursery and you do not need to give a reason for withdrawing. As the study is anonymous we will not be able to identify your child's information, so you can't withdraw it later on.

Q Who will use the results?

The results will be grouped together by PHE who will write a report which will be used by a range of people to help with their work. This will include the NHS to help with local planning of treatment services and local authorities to support their responsibility for monitoring the health, including oral health, of their local population and the Department of Health and Social Care.

A number of other government departments and agencies may also use the results. Survey information may also be shared with researcher partners who are viewed by PHE as fit to carry out suitable research.

Publications based on the data will be made available on the Gov.uk website and might be published in journals from Spring 2021. You can see the results of similar surveys on this website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/oral-health#related-intelligence>

Q Is the survey confidential?

Yes, the information you give us will be treated as strictly confidential as directed by the Code of Practice adopted by the NHS and the General Data Protection Regulations, 2018, and will only be used for statistical research purposes. The information about your child will be stored in a computer file which will be password-protected and only dental staff and Public Health England staff will have access to it. No names or addresses will be recorded on the survey forms, just a postcode and a code for ethnic group. The information will be used to produce statistics that will not identify any individuals; instead information about groups of people will be reported. Survey information is also provided to other approved organisations for statistical purposes only. All such statistics produced are subject to similar codes and the same standards of protection are applied to your information at all times. The consent forms and all other data will be securely transported and held by the survey team who will be the only people who will have access to it. As soon as the survey results are published the consent forms and other data will be securely disposed of by survey teams who are used to dealing with such information.

Please see this short film which shows parents what happens on examination day and explains why it is important that they support the survey by returning their child's consent form: <https://youtu.be/BzrjK8HRpD8>

If you have questions, comments or complaints contact:

The Oral Health Team on 0300 790 0158 or kentchft.oralhealthkent@nhs.net