

Parental knowledge and attitude change following caries counseling via telehealth

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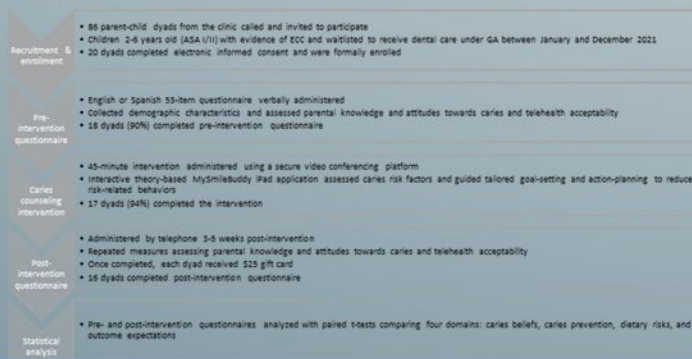
Background

- Early childhood caries (ECC) affects nearly half of US children by kindergarten, causing symptoms and dysfunction
- Conventionally treated by pulp therapy, restorative materials and extractions, often under general anesthesia (GA) in the operating room (OR) at high expense and recurrence (53- 79% in two years) because such treatment does not address underlying behavioral drivers of disease
- A tablet-based application has been shown to provide effective family-level behavioral caries counseling when administered by community healthcare workers in-person
- As efforts are made to limit in-person visits during the pandemic, telehealth has improved access to quality and affordable care for patients while maintaining physical distancing for patient safety

Purpose

To assess parental knowledge and attitude change following dental caries counseling using the MySmileBuddy via telehealth

Methods



Survey Measures

Caries beliefs

Response options: "yes", "no", "I don't know", "refuse"

- All kids get cavities
- Cavities are no big deal
- Cavities in baby teeth are not important since these teeth fall out
- Cavities can be prevented
- Fluoride is safe
- New York City tap water is better for a child's teeth than bottled water
- New York City tap water is safe

Caries prevention knowledge

Response Options: "yes", "no", "I don't know", "refuse"

- Cavities are caused by an infectious disease
- Cavities can be stopped, even after they have started
- Brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste can prevent cavities
- Teeth should be brushed for at least one minute to prevent cavities
- Young children need the help of an adult when brushing their teeth
- New York City tap water contains fluoride

Please tell me all the ways you can think of to prevent cavities:

- Brushing with fluoride toothpaste
- Brushing for at least one minute
- Brushing your child's teeth for him/her
- Drinking water
- Limiting candy
- Limiting sweet drinks
- Other (please specify): _____
- Refused
- Don't know

Dietary risk knowledge

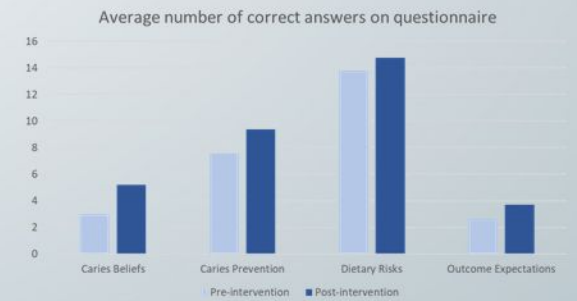
Response options: "yes", "no", "I don't know", "refuse"

- Eating starchy snacks, like crackers, pretzels, or chips more than 3 times a day between meals can cause cavities.
 - Eating sugary snacks, like candies, pastries, or cookies more than 3 times a day between meals can cause cavities.
- Please tell me if each is likely to cause cavities by saying "yes", "no" or "I don't know"
- Cheese
 - Beans
 - Fruit Roll-ups
 - Carrots
 - Chips
 - Goldfish crackers
 - Lollipops
 - Apples
 - Raisins
 - Bacon
 - Cookies
 - Gummies
 - Pretzels
 - Soda
 - Juice
 - Sweetened milk (including flavored milk, like vanilla, chocolate, or strawberry)

Outcome Expectations

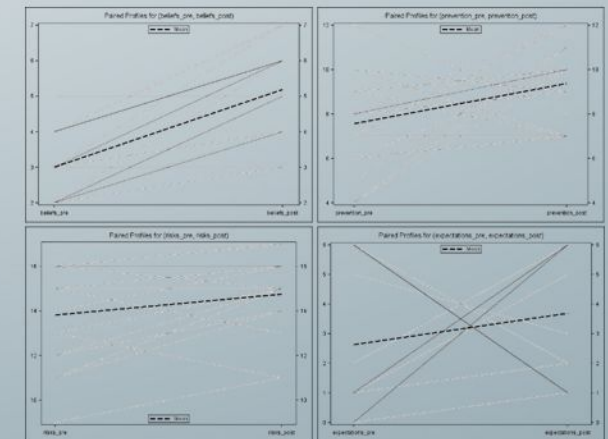
Please tell me all the benefits you can think of to your child having healthy teeth

- Comfortable smiling
- Able to talk better
- Grow healthy permanent adult teeth - Have better general health
- No miss days from school
- Decrease bad breath
- Other (please specify): _____
- Refused
- Don't know



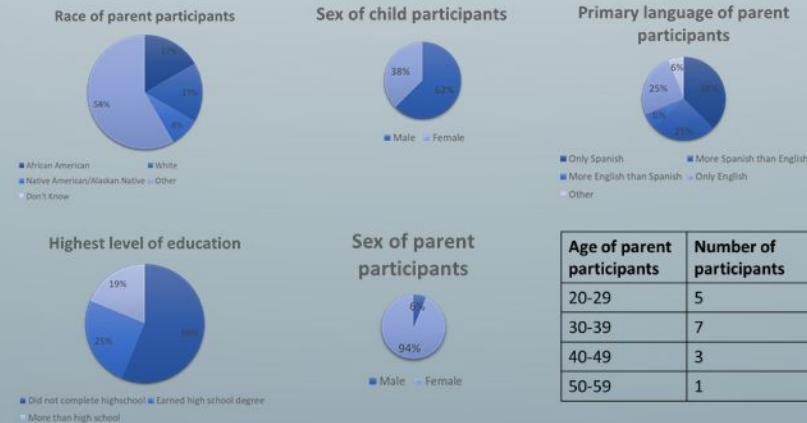
Caries belief ($p < .0001$) and caries prevention ($p < .0459$) domains significantly improved post-intervention. Change in dietary risks ($p < .0511$) and outcome expectation ($p < .3713$) domains were not statistically significant.

Paired Profiles of Dyads



Findings

Demographics



Sex of parent participants



Age of parent participants	Number of participants
20-29	5
30-39	7
40-49	3
50-59	1

Limitations

The small sample size limits ability to explore associations in the dataset and generalizability of findings. Time commitment required to participate and availability to answer and return phone calls limited recruitment and retention rates.

Conclusions

Findings suggest caries counseling via telehealth effectively improves parental knowledge and attitudes about caries prevention. Additional research with a larger sample may better assess the intervention's ability to improve dietary risks and outcome expectations and ultimately enhance the oral health of children at high risk for caries.