



# Wisconsin Promising Practices Program



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## Introduction

The Wisconsin Promising Practices (WPP) Program is one component of the *What Works: Reducing Health Disparities in Wisconsin Communities* project.

The overall goal of the What Works project is to identify and disseminate public health interventions that will help reduce racial and ethnic health disparities in Wisconsin.

- The WPP program aims to:
- Develop a model for identifying local programs that show promise in improving health in racial and ethnic minority communities.
  - Recognize and support these programs by providing technical assistance for program planning and evaluation.
  - Assist these programs to document their efforts and outcomes so that others can learn from their examples.

## Conceptual model

A **promising practice** is defined as a practice or program which:

- Focuses on improving health in a racial or ethnic minority population,
- Produces at least one positive outcome that can be demonstrated with systematically collected quantitative and/or qualitative data,
- Is based to some degree on proven practices from the research literature and/or the experience of community practitioners and leaders,
- Is well suited to its context in terms of language, belief systems and other cultural factors.

## Implementation

Programs are selected to participate based on criteria which mirror WPP's definition of a promising practice.

- Participants complete a **Program Summary** over a six-month period:
- Summaries document each program's context, strategies, outcomes, and lessons learned.
  - Technical assistance is provided by What Works staff, as needed, to complete summaries.
  - Summaries are published and disseminated to area minority health stakeholders.

Programs also participate in presentations about their programs to local minority health stakeholders.

Participating programs are provided \$5,000 to partially offset the cost of participating in the program.

## Pilot Participants

Two community-based organizations participated in the initial round of WPP.

➢ **Smart Smiles** is a school-based oral health program serving low-income children in the Milwaukee school system. The program provides preventive care as well as referrals to dental providers for needed follow-up care. Smart Smiles is a program of the Madre Angela Dental Clinic, which is sponsored by Columbia St. Mary's Health System.

➢ **Projecto Salud – Moving Towards a Healthier Community** is a collaborative project of CORE/EI Centro, a natural healing center, and Aurora Walker's Point Community Clinic in Milwaukee. Projecto Salud's activities include an innovative health promoter program, the creation and support of the Milwaukee Latino Health Coalition, and collaborations with many health-related organizations in the Milwaukee area.

## Expected Results

- Development of a model for identifying promising practices in the state.
- Identification of the shared characteristics of programs that are having an impact on minority health in WI.
  - Adoption of key elements of the WPP model by the Wisconsin Division of Public Health Minority Health Program's mini-grant program.

- Increased capacity of participating organizations in the areas of program planning and evaluation.
- Through the process of completing a Program Summary, participating organizations synthesize and document what is known about their programs and the outcomes they produce.
  - Technical assistance from What Works staff, including focused consultation on useful and scientifically sound outcome measures, is intended to enhance participants' ability to communicate clearly and concisely about the effectiveness of their programs.
  - Completed Program Summaries should also serve as useful tools for future fundraising efforts.

- Dissemination of local promising practices to area minority health stakeholders.
- Completed Program Summaries will provide documentation of promising local programs for others to learn from and potentially replicate. Summaries will include information about how programs were implemented, but also the political, organizational and other factors that contributed to the program's success.
  - Programs will also participate in presentations to area minority health stakeholders to share information about their programs.



A Milwaukee public school student practices her brushing technique before having dental sealants applied through the Smart Smiles program.



Los Promotores de Salud graduated from a 12-week, 65-hour training session. Promotores de Salud are lay workers that build civic capacity by being active members of the community and increase access to health services in the Latino community.

## Additional Information

For more information about the What Works project and the Wisconsin Promising Practices Program, visit our webpage:

<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/MinorityHealth/prompractices/index.htm>

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