

# Dental Hygienist Liaison Orientation



National Center on  
Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety

Revised: May 2024





# Role of State DHLs

- Act as communication link
- Collaborate with state organizations
- Promote evidence-informed information and materials



# Minimum Requirements for DHLs



Maintain ADHA membership



Complete quarterly reports



Respond to requests in a timely manner



Send monthly e-mail to stakeholders



Attend quarterly DHL calls/webinars



Submit annual expense allowance request, when eligible



Submit one presentation proposal

# More ideas...

## DHL At-A-Glance Activity Guide

- <https://www.astdd.org/docs/2021-dhl-at-a-glance.pdf>



National Center on

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## DHL At-A-Glance Activity Guide

### Required Activities

Activities are identified by the following categories:

AC = Access to Care      AD = Administration      AS = Assessment  
CO = Collaboration      ED = Education      PR = Prevention

#### Monthly

- ED: Send e-mail to state partners (e.g., Head Start association, Head Start collaboration office, oral health program, oral health coalition) and Head Start staff with relevant oral health information and resources.
- ED: Respond to information requests in a timely manner.

#### Quarterly

- ED: Participate in a call with your regional DHL coordinator.
  - ED: Participate in a DHL webinar or listen to an archived webinar posted to the DHL webpage.
  - AD: Complete a [progress report](#).
- Progress report due dates:
- 1st quarter report—due January 7 (Oct–Dec)
  - 2nd quarter report—due April 7 (Jan–Mar)
  - 3rd quarter report—due July 7 (Apr–Jun)
  - 4th quarter report—due September 15 (Jul–Sep)

#### Annually

- ED: Submit a proposal to present at a state meeting using NCHBHS-approved presentation slides. Presentations can be in-person or virtual.
- AD: Request an annual expense allowance once activities in three categories are completed.
- CO: Maintain American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) membership. (DHL expense allowance can be used to pay for this.)

### Other Activities: Examples by Category

#### AC: Facilitate access to oral health care.

- Collaborate with state groups (e.g., dental association, oral health coalition, primary care association) to recruit health professionals to provide oral health care to Head Start participants.

#### AS: Promote awareness of Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) oral health data.

- Review [PIR](#) oral health data to identify state trends and potential issues related to meeting the [Head Start Program Performance Standards](#), and share key findings with state partners.

#### CO: Foster communication with DHL project leadership, DHLs, and Head Start staff.

- Participate in the DHL discussion list, read messages, and share information and resources.
- Participate in state [health managers networks](#) and share information and resources.
- Attend DHL events at national conferences (e.g., ADHA, National Oral Health Conference), as personal funding permits.

#### ED: Share oral health information and NCHBHS resources with Head Start staff and state partners.

- Submit a proposal to present at a state meeting using Office of Head Start (OHS)-approved presentation slides. Presentations can be in-person or virtual.
- With guidance and approval from the NCHBHS oral health management team, present at a regional meeting using OHS-approved slides.
- Prepare a newsletter article using content from NCHBHS oral health resources and share it with state partners.

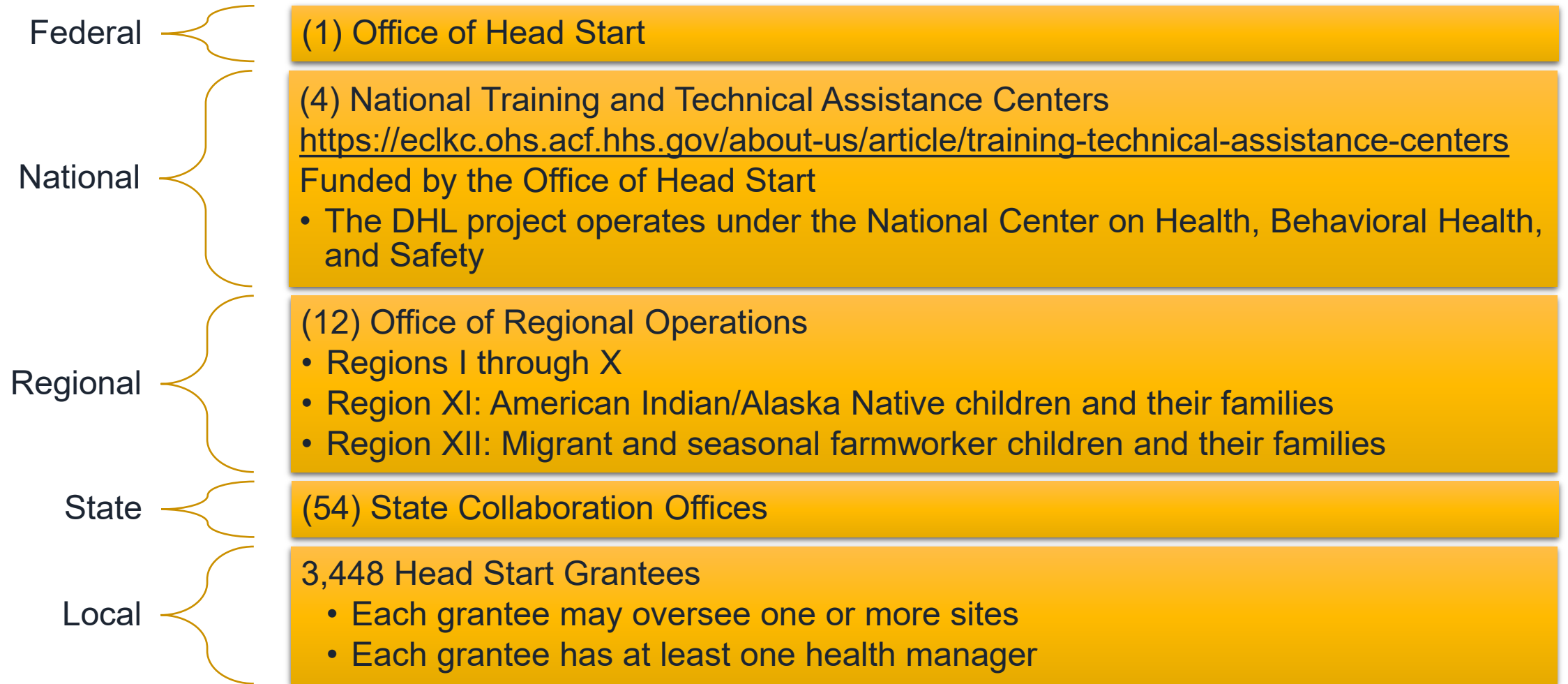
#### PR: Encourage preventive oral health.

- Promote toothbrushing in Head Start and Early Head Start programs—ideally group toothbrushing at the table—and in Early Head Start programs.
- Promote use of fluoride in Head Start programs (e.g., brushing with fluoride toothpaste, drinking community fluoridated water).

Promote receipt of fluorides (e.g., fluoride varnish, silver diamine fluoride) in dental, medical, and other settings.



# Head Start Organization





# DHL Project

Office of Head Start

National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety

DHL Project

Oral Health Management Team

Regional DHL Coordinators

State DHLs





# NCHBHS Oral Health Management Team



Katrina Holt  
OHRC  
Oral Health Lead



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OHRC  
Health Education  
Specialist



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ASTDD  
DPH Consultant &  
Writer/Editor



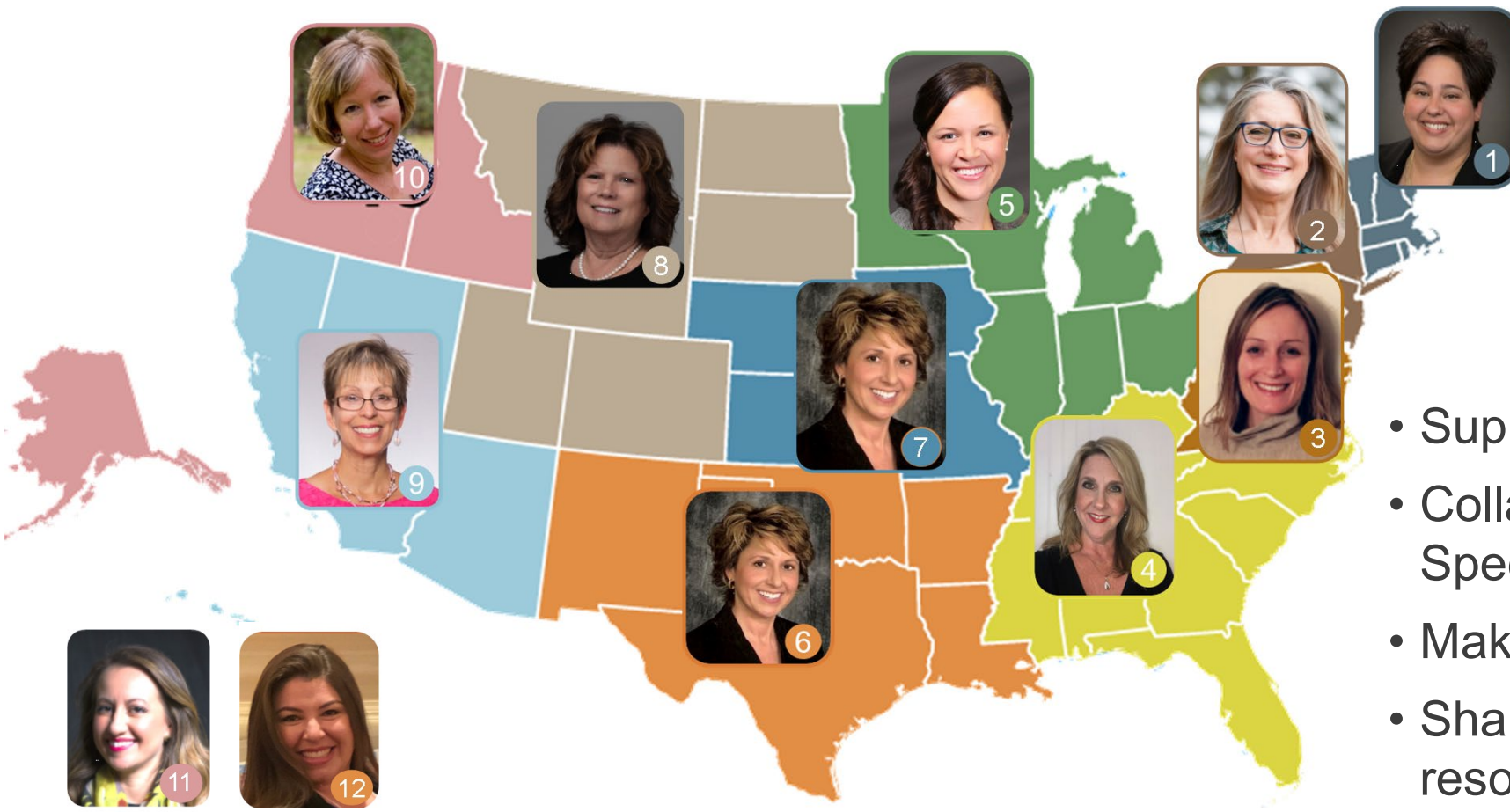
Kathy Hunt  
ASTDD  
DHL Lead



Gina Sharps  
ASTDD  
DHL Co-Lead



# Role of Regional DHL Coordinators

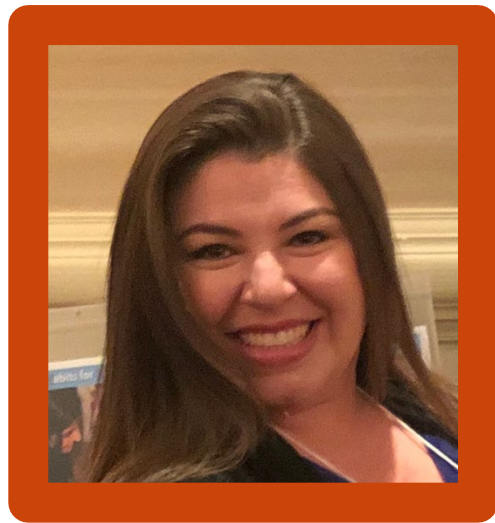


- Support state DHLs
- Collaborate with Regional Health Specialist
- Make presentations
- Share NCHBHS-produced resources
- Participate in evaluation activities





# Region XI and XII DHL Coordinators



**Julie Seward, RDH, MEd**

Region XI

American Indian  
and Alaska Native  
Head Start

**Mariela Leyba, RDH**

Region XII

Migrant and  
Seasonal Head  
Start

- Collaborate with regional health specialists
- Support state DHLs with AIAN & MSHS populations
- Make presentations
- Review NCHBHS oral health resources
- Share NCHBHS produced resources

When receiving a request from one of your local Head Start programs, it is very important to share that request and support provided to local program with regional DHL coordinator (XI or XII)





# Your First Steps as a Dental Hygienist Liaison

1. Orientation with regional DHL coordinator
2. Create email key contacts distribution list
3. Send introduction email to key contacts
4. Subscribe to the ***Resources to Make you Smile!*** Newsletter-  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/subscribe>
5. Post to the DHL discussion list- [headstart@groups.astd.org](mailto:headstart@groups.astd.org)





# ASTDD DHL Webpage

astdd  
Where oral health lives

Association of State & Territorial Dental Directors  
3858 Cashill Blvd., Reno, NV 89509  
Phone 775-626-5008

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Dental Hygienist Liaison Projects

**Helpful Hint:**  
Save address on  
favorites bar for  
ready access

<https://www.astdd.org/head-start-state-dental-hygienist-liaisons-information>



# DHL Webpage- Overview



## National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety

### Dental Hygienist Liaison Projects

Because of the importance of oral health during pregnancy and early childhood, in 2011 the National Center on Health, working in partnership with the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA), created the Dental Hygienist Liaison (DHL) project. Under the DHL project, one dental hygienist from each state volunteers to help promote oral health for pregnant women and children enrolled in Head Start. The DHL project continues as part of the Office of Head Start- currently funded through the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS). The National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center is the project lead for NCHBHS oral health activities and works in partnership with ASTDD, which coordinates the Dental Hygienist Liaison Project.

### Role of the Dental Hygienist Liaison

DHLs promote oral health in Head Start by:

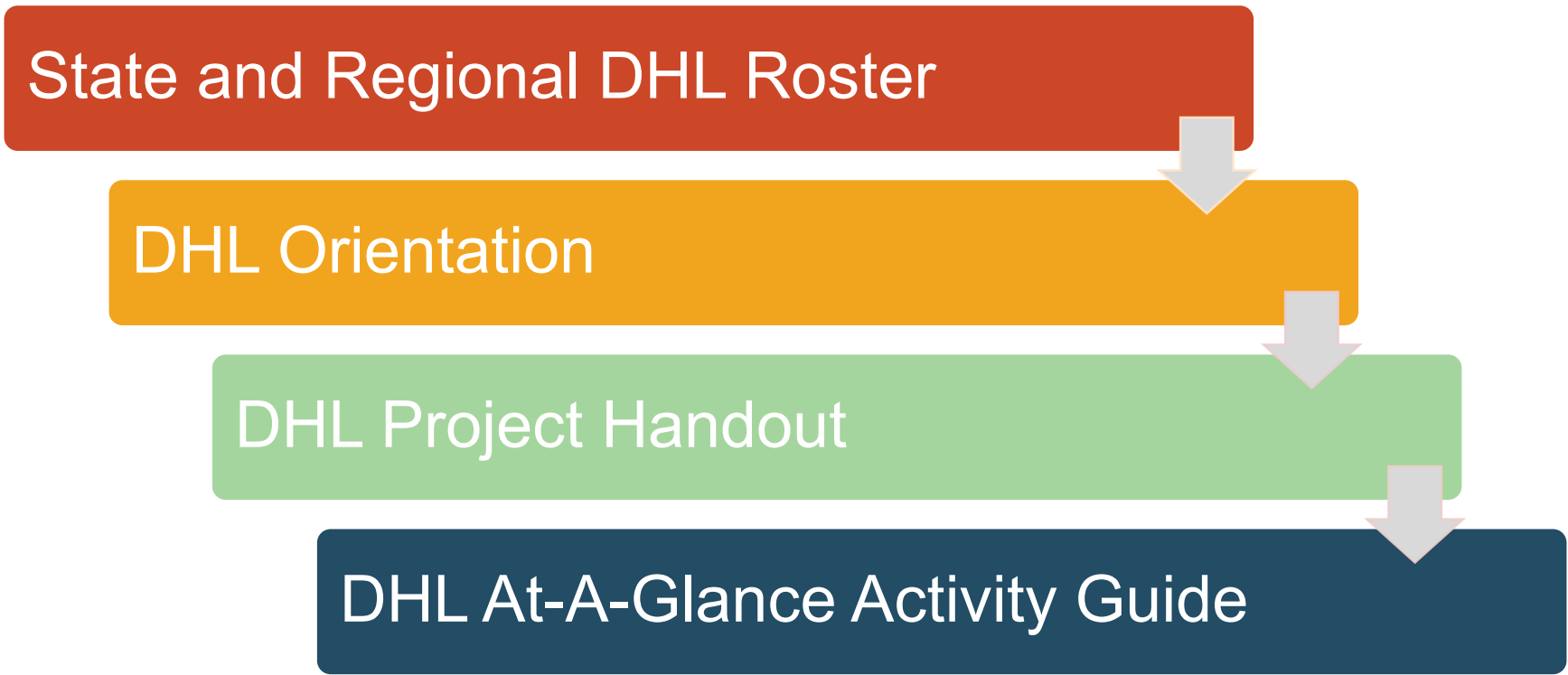
- ▶ Providing a communication link between NCHBHS and Head Start agencies in their states
- ▶ Collaborating with state organizations such as oral health programs, Head Start collaboration offices, and Head Start Associations
- ▶ Providing oral health presentations at state conferences and meetings
- ▶ Offering strategies to improve access to oral health care for pregnant women and children enrolled in Head Start
- ▶ Working with oral health professionals to establish partnerships with local Head Start programs
- ▶ Sharing information about the importance of oral health and regular oral health visits, good nutrition and oral hygiene practices, and oral-injury-prevention strategies with Head Start program staff
- ▶ Serving on Head Start committees (e.g., Head Start health manager networks, Head Start health services advisory committees) and oral health advisory boards and coalitions to promote the oral health of Head Start participants





# DHL Resources

Information about DHL project





# DHL Resources

## Information about Head Start

- [Early Head Start/ Head Start Program Locator](#)
- [Head Start Performance Standards Related to Oral Health](#)
- [Program Information Reports \(PIR\)](#)
- [EPSDT Dental Periodicity Schedules by State](#)
- [Understanding the Dental Periodicity Schedule and Oral Exam: A Guide for Head Start Staff](#)





# DHL Resources

## Oral Health Social Media Campaign

2021 Social Media Campaign for Head Start Parents and Caregivers  
Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. <http://bit.ly/HeadStartASTDD>





# Key Contacts

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State Head Start Associations

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Head Start Regional Health Specialists

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State Head Start Collaboration office

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National Head Start Association (NHSA)

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State Oral Health Programs

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State Oral Health Coalitions

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National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS)







# Approved Educational Materials

Important: For consistent messaging, the Office of Head Start asks that DHLs only share approved resources and use only approved presentations

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/oral-health>



[NCHBHS Presentations | Powered by Box](#)



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## Helpful Hint:

Save addresses on favorites bar for ready access

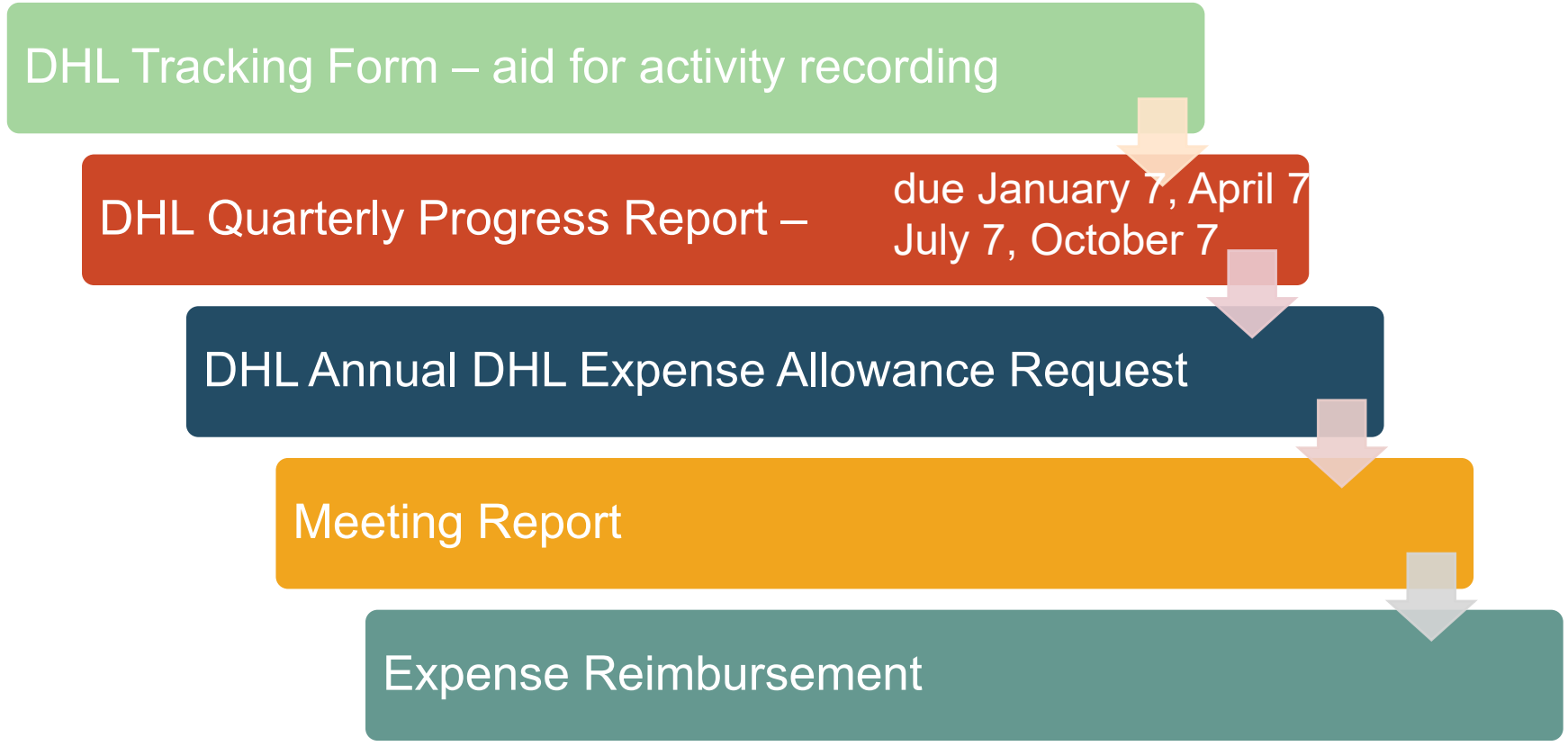


# DHL Webinars





# Forms & Reports





# Contact Information

**DHL Project Lead Consultant: Kathy Hunt**

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**DHL Project Co-Lead Consultant: Gina Sharps**

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**Regional DHL Coordinator: See roster for contact information**

**National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety**

Phone: (888) 227-5125

E-mail: [health@ecetta.info](mailto:health@ecetta.info)

Website: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/health>

