

# Challenges for oral health promotion in the School Health Program in Brazil: a literature review informed by the CFIR framework

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**Background:** Established in 2007, the Programa de Saúde na Escola/ School Health Program (PSE) aims to contribute to the comprehensive education of Brazilian students in the public school system through health promotion, prevention and care [1]. Among the actions included in the program, are those aimed at improving oral health conditions through the participation of dentists in activities such as health education, topical application of fluoride, atraumatic restorative treatment (ART) and supervised brushing [1]. Although it presents favourable results, the implementation of the oral health component within the scope of the program is still low in several regions of the country. The objective of this study was to identify the challenges for promoting oral health in the School Health Program.

**Methods:** We conducted an integrative literature review in PubMed (Publisher Medline) and SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library Online) databases. The search took place between February and March 2022 and tracked studies published between 2007 and 2022 using the descriptors: Programa de Saúde na Escola; PSE; School Health Services; Dentistry; Dental surgeon; Dentist; Oral Health Promotion; Oral health; Preventive Dentistry. We categorized the identified challenges based on the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR) [2]. For this categorization, we used Minayo's thematic categorical content analysis model [3].

**Results:** Challenges related to the internal context were the most frequent, with emphasis on those related to relationship and communication networks, and readiness for implementation. Among the most repeated challenges were the low promotion of intersectoriality and the lack of materials and adequate structure to carry out the program's activities (see table).

**Conclusion:** Despite a political definition at the national level, the lack of local preparation for organizing and maintaining program activities is an obstacle to promoting oral health through the program, thus demanding the use of implementation strategies to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability.

Characteristics of the Intervention	Relative advantage	Erasure of oral health issues to the detriment of other health needs and curricular demands	E3;
		Low perception of professionals about the program's ability to solve the problems experienced	E7
	Adaptability	Lack of use of innovative or motivating approaches in the implementation of programme activities	S1; E3; E4; E7; E8
		Use of approaches disconnected from reality and local context	S5; E6; E7; E8
Centrality of actions in students with neglect of actions aimed at the family and community		S5; E6; E8	
Quality of the project presentation	Lack of clear guidelines for program execution	E4;	
	Outer Setting	Needs of Patients and Resources	Socioeconomic problems and social inequalities
External policies and incentives		Administrative discontinuity	S1; E3
	Lack of management support for programme implementation	E2; E4; E6; E7	
	Network fragmentation with low integration between services	E4	
Inner Setting	Networks of relationships and Communication	Low promotion of intersectority	E3; E4; S5; E6; E7; E8
		Lack of co-responsibility among students, parents, dentists, school staff	E6; E8
	Culture	Prioritization of curative actions over preventive ones	E8
	Implementation climate (Tension for change)	Underreporting of oral health problems at school/Lack of knowledge of students' health needs	E4
	Implementation Readiness (Access to information and knowledge)	Low knowledge of education professionals on oral health issues, hindering dialogue with the actors of the program	E2; E3; E4; S5; E6; E7; E8
		Lack of inputs and adequate structure to carry out the activities of the program and support its practices	S5; E6; E7; E8
	Implementation Readiness (Available Resources)	Lack of specific workload assigned to the program	E3
Characteristics of individuals	Self-Efficacy	Lack of user engagement to adhere to the program's actions	S1; E2; S5;
		Individual attitudes towards the search for professional training by education professionals	E3; E4; E8
	Individual stage of change	Inequality in access to oral health information	S1;
		Low adherence of professionals to the activities of the program	S5; E8

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