

## INTRODUCTION

The University of Florida Dental Outreach program established a partnership with Amigos Center in Immokalee, Florida, to help reduce the incidence of decay in children of the families served by the center. Most of the families consist of recently immigrated migrant workers who do not have dental insurance or an established dental home for their children. Studies have shown that community water fluoridation (CWF) is one of the safest, most cost-effective public health initiatives to prevent tooth decay and promote dental health. Residents of Immokalee, FL have access to optimally fluoridated community water (0.7mg/L). However, studies have shown an increase in the perception that tap water is unsafe and bottled water consumption increases by 7% each year, worldwide.

## OBJECTIVES

**Primary:** Assess parental knowledge and opinions of fluoridated drinking water.

**Secondary:** Identify if parental knowledge and opinions of CWF affect their children's caries prevalence.

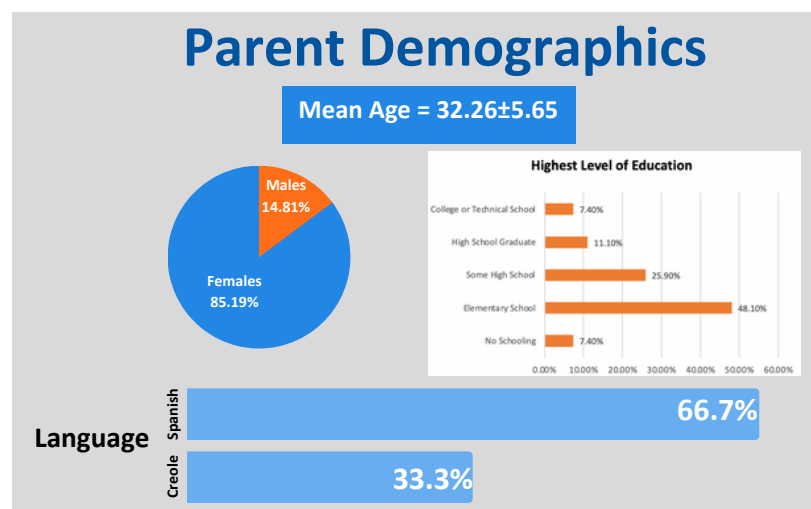
## METHODS

**Setting:** University of Florida Dental Outreach Team at the Amigos Center in Immokalee, FL

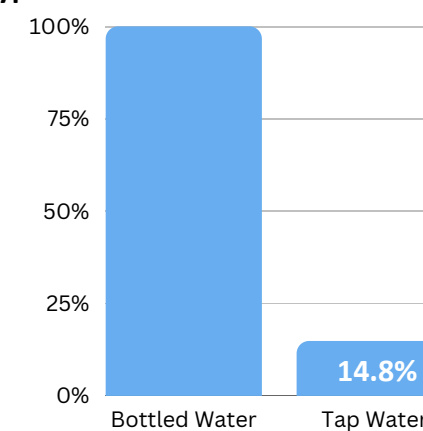
**Participants:** Children being screened at the Amigos Center for the first time (aged 0-17 years) and their parents/guardians (n=27).

**Data Collection/Analysis:** Surveys regarding CWF were administered to parents of new patients at the Amigos Center in Immokalee, Florida who presented for dental screenings by the University of Florida Dental Outreach Team. The dmft/DMFT indices of the patients were collected. A descriptive analysis was conducted and results were compared to identify relationships (if any).

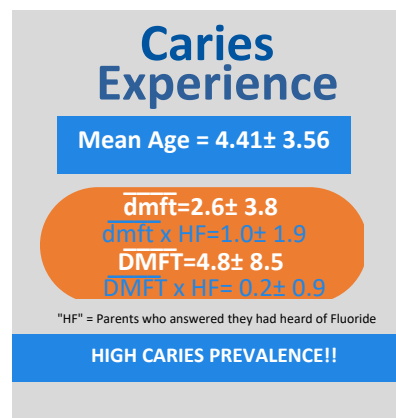
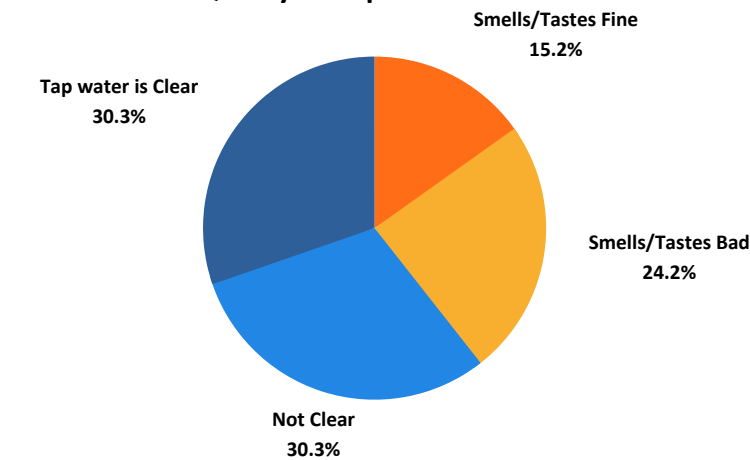
## RESULTS



Type of Water Children are Drinking at Home



Quality of Tap Water at Home



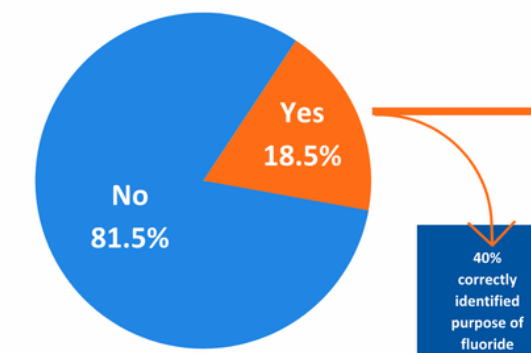
### Statistical Analysis

Paired Samples Test

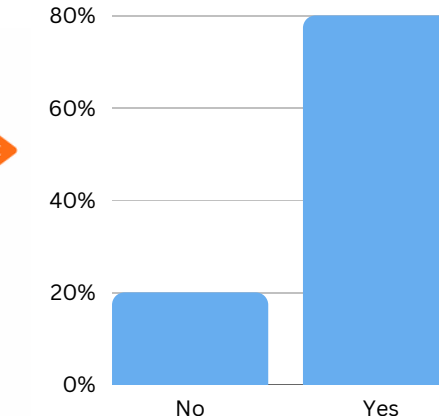
Variables	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
DMFT x Heard of Fluoride	0.425	-0.23 - 0.52
dmft x Heard of Fluoride	0.006	0.51 - 2.74 *
DMFT x Education Level	0.006	-2.43 --0.45 *
dmft x Education Level	0.473	-1.58 - 0.76

\* = found to be statistically significant

Have You Ever Heard of Fluoride?



Do you believe fluoride should be added to community water? Is it safe for children to drink fluoridated water?



## CONCLUSIONS

There is a lack of parental knowledge regarding fluoride in this rural population. The vast majority of participants report their children do not drink tap water at home. There is a high caries prevalence among children in this population. Primary tooth caries prevalence is related to parents' knowledge of fluoride. Caries prevalence in permanent teeth is also higher in children whose parents have less knowledge about fluoride, though in this study this relationship was not statistically significant. Permanent tooth caries prevalence is related to their parents' highest level of education. Overall, there is a need for more educational programs about fluoridated water and overall oral health for people living in rural communities to help reduce the caries burden of children within this population.