

National Oral Health Conference: Collaborating for Oral Health



Children's Dental Services

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Strength in Community

"A solitary ant, afield, cannot be considered to have much of anything on his mind...It is only when you watch the dense mass of thousands of ants, crowded together around the Hill, blackening the ground, that you begin to see the whole beast, and now you observe it thinking, planning, calculating."

The Lives of a Cell, Lewis Thomas

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Children's Dental Services

Since 1919,
Children's Dental Services
is dedicated to improving
the oral health of low-
income children in the
diverse Minnesota
community.



History

- Children's Dental Services (CDS) has a history spanning 9 decades of providing dental care to diverse and low-income children and pregnant women.
- Pioneered two major concepts for making affordable dental care accessible to children:
 - First dental program in the nation to provide on-site dental care to Head Start children.
 - On-site and mobile care to children in schools, and community centers.

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CDS- Culturally Diverse Staff



•Exceptionally diverse and multilingual staff : speaks 15 different languages and hail from 15 different countries

• Provide full range of culturally focused dental services



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Summary of Research Findings

- **Role of Community and Public Health Partnerships on Oral Health**
 - In 2007, Moradian found that in an effort to eliminate children's oral health disparities, paradigms must be changed to integrate oral health into other health and social programs, and empower communities. Oral health advocates have a key role in ensuring oral health is integrated into policy for children. Dental schools have a leadership role to play in expanding community partnerships and providing education in health determinants.
- **Creating a Successful School-Based Mobile Dental Program**
 - Dental disease is one of the leading causes of school absenteeism for children. Jackson, Jahnke & Kerber (2007) found that by removing cost, time, transportation, and bureaucratic barriers, oral health programs are able to reach more children than fixed-site clinics. Jackson's results also found that this type of model can be useful to communities who have families with unmet need for dental care and communities that have tight federal, state, and local government budgets.
- **Health services collaborations and Head Start**
 - In 1990, Seitz and Zigler examined improvement in receipt of health care services as an outcome of attending a Head Start program. 78 children, in three groups (n=40 (mean age 48.6 mo) enrolled in Head Start, 18 (mean age 35.5 mo) on a Head Start waiting list, and 20 (mean age 44.4 mo) enrolled in a nursery school serving middle-class families) were enrolled in the study. Children's medical and dental records were examined with regard to health screenings, immunizations, pediatric check-ups, and dental examinations. Children attending Head Start were more likely than middle-class children and waiting-list children to receive age-appropriate health screenings and to receive a dental examination.

Smiles Across Minnesota

- Based on findings such as the above, Smiles Across Minnesota (SAM) is focused on providing care for uninsured or underserved children in the community as a school-based preventive oral health program.
- Originated with a pilot program in the Minneapolis and St Paul schools in 2005. SAM has grown to include services in Duluth, Rochester, St Cloud and later this year, the Iron Range in Northeastern MN.



Smiles Across Minnesota

SAM is a coalition of dedicated volunteers representing health, community, government, education and business organizations dedicated to:

- Preventing and reducing dental disease for all Minnesota children, focusing on underserved and uninsured children.
- Supporting school- and community-based access points that increase the number of underserved children getting basic dental care.
- Promoting education for good oral health.



Smiles Across Minnesota

Provides children ages 3 to 18 with preventative dental services, including cleanings, fluoride treatments, oral health education and sealants – right within the schools.



Smiles Across Minnesota-Duluth

At Right:
Certified dental hygienist Heather Glockle and dental assistant Anders Osthus, both of Duluth, provide preventive care services to a student at Lowell Elementary on January 24th, 2008



Smiles Across Minnesota

- The growth and success of SAM is accomplished and made possible by partnerships. These partnerships specifically include:
 - Local and national corporate philanthropy
 - United Way
 - School superintendents
 - Cities
 - Community-based entities
 - Volunteers

National and Corporate Philanthropy

- **Delta Dental**
 - In addition to providing dental benefit programs, members participate in projects and programs specifically designed to improve both the oral and physical health of their constituents.
 - **Smilemobiles Program:** For over 30 years, these self-contained, mobile dental units have been traveling through inner city and rural areas providing oral health care and education to school children.
 - **Healthy Kids Programs:** Many Delta Dental Member Companies actively participate in programs that provide preventative dental care to underserved, low income children who do not qualify for Medicaid.
 - **Water Fluoridation Programs:** Many Delta Dental member companies work collaboratively with communities to educate and support fluoridated water systems programs in their states.
 - **Oral Health Educational Programs:** for young school children
 - **Programs regarding Oral Health:** designed for seniors and individuals with disabilities
 - **PANDA:** (Prevent Abuse and Neglect through Dental Awareness) The PANDA coalition was started in Missouri in 1992 to address the lack of dental professionals reporting apparent child abuse and neglect. From 1992 to 1995, the total number of child abuse and neglect reports rose by almost 18%, and, in that same three-year period of PANDA's educational programs, dentists' reports increased by more than 160%.
- **3M**
 - 3M support helps to enrich and increase resiliency in youth through prevention efforts from early childhood to 12th grade in order to build and sustain healthy communities.
- **Trident**
 - The makers of Trident sugar-free gum are committed to enhancing access to quality dental care for those in need, specifically in underserved communities. Trident participates in sponsorship programs providing school-based oral exams and sealants for disease prevention. Paired with Oral Health America, Trident is working to ensure the success of the Smiles Across America program.

United Way

- Greater Twin Cities United Way
 - Initiated Bright Smiles program, which involves direct funding as well as support for policy and advocacy.
- United Way of Greater Duluth, Inc.
 - Provides direct funding, publicity and in-kind support including mailing and printing of brochures and consents.
- United Way of Central Minnesota
 - Provides publicity and support.

School Superintendents

- Provide support for program
- Help work with families to promote services among community
- Research on impact of the importance of a school-based clinic: In 2005, research performed by Gance-Cleveland and Yousey found that holistic services provided by a school-based health center positively impacts the health of preschool children.



Duluth Schools Superintendent: Keith Dixon with the first patient who received care through the SAM-Duluth School Partnership

Gance-Cleveland, Bonnie, and Yvonne Yousey. "Benefits of a School-Based Health Center in a Preschool." *Clinical Nursing Research* 14 (2005): 327-42.

Cities

- Mayors
 - CDS and SAM work closely with the mayors of the various communities in which CDS provides care.
 - Mayors convey support and trust in the program to the community
- Libraries
 - CDS and SAM provides mobile dental care within libraries, a place of community congregation
- Recreational Centers
 - Care within a place of previously established trust, helps to ensure the best possible experience for the child

Community Based Entities

- Churches
- Homeless shelters
- Juvenile detention centers
- Public housing

*CDS and SAM provides dental care within all of these entities; the entities provide in-kind administrative support and space.

Volunteers

- Students
- Faculty at local colleges and universities

*Volunteers come from within the communities served and provide research, hands-on assistance and other support to the program

*The SAM project helps build a sense of community and common purpose between these organizations and CDS/SAM

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- United Way, www.livsunited.org
- Greater Twin Cities United Way: <http://www.unitedwaytwincities.org>
- United Way of Greater Duluth, Inc.: <http://unitedwayduluth.org>
- United Way of Central Minnesota: <http://www.unitedwayhelps.org>

