

Leading Change for  
Oral Health in  
Pennsylvania

## **2021-2022 Mini Grant Program Summary Report June 2022**

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In September 2021, the Pennsylvania Coalition for Oral Health announced recipients of the 2021-22 PA Oral Health Plan Mini-Grant Program. The goal of the program is to facilitate the implementation of the goals and recommendations of the 2020-2030 PA Oral Health Plan. Following is a summary of the initiatives that were funded by the grants.

*Funding for this project is through the Pennsylvania Department of Health through Centers for Disease and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by CDC, HHS or the U.S. Government.*

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### **Kids Smiles**

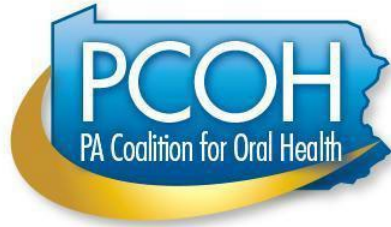
*Kids Smiles Workforce Development Program*  
Philadelphia County  
Plan Priority Addressed: Workforce

[Kids Smiles](#) created a streamlined workforce development dental assisting (DA) program using the current 13th edition textbook *Modern Dental Assisting* (Bird and Robinson.) The program development included extracting the key elements of four-handed dental assisting techniques with other relevant critical elements of knowledge required for a non-dental professional to become a strong dental assistant. The organization met the original goal of the program to expand the dental workforce and increase the number of dental professionals serving in Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas (DHPSAs).



During the reporting period, the DA training program enrolled one participant trainee. The trainee started clinical work in the following order: observation, room set up and break down, sterilization, assisting chair-side in hygiene and operative procedures. The part-time schedule of the program enabled the trainee the ability to carry out paid office duties in addition to the training. In addition, time was allotted during some days for in-office study so that the trainee was not overburdened with work at home.

This summer, the newly trained DA will progress to the final phase of her DA training of radiology and clinical application for taking radiographs. She will learn to apply the textbook knowledge with hands-on learning and guidance from a 20-year dental assistant x-ray



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technician. In addition to her readings, there is a study guide to help her prepare for the PA radiology exam. Her future opportunities include sitting for the National Dental Assisting Boards, and when credentialed, moving on to an expanded function dental assistant (EFDA) program. Kids Smiles supports DAs by contributing financially toward the tuition for those programs as long as the student has a grade of a C or above.

Kids Smiles will begin recruitment for the next trainee candidate for fall of 2022. The radiology review will also be used for other Kids Smiles DAs recently hired from other local DA programs, many of whom do not have their x-ray licenses yet. Some of the DAs also completed an EFDA program. Kids Smiles is developing a study program to support their progression toward a PA state EFDA certification.

The results of the program addressed the 2020-2030 PA Oral Health Plan Oral Health workforce priority.

Kids Smiles plans to continue the program in 2022 and 2023 and recruit new participants. The organization submitted a request for funding to continue the program from a private foundation.

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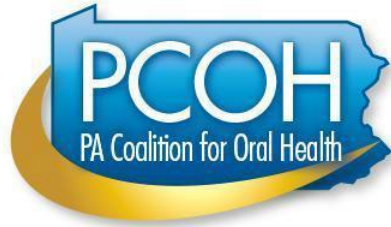
### ***Children First PA***

*Give Kids a Smile Free Dental Care via Children First  
Bucks, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties  
Plan Priority Addressed: Access, Prevention, and Education*

[Children First PA](#) connected uninsured and under-insured children in Southeast Pennsylvania to vital oral health care services. In 2022, the organization recruited two offices to treat a total of 70 children on May 6th and May 7th for preventive and restorative care. One hundred percent of the children had no dental insurance or had insurance that would not cover dental care.

Children were identified with the Children First Insurance Helpline and from participation in previous free dental and vision care days. Key community partners also connected undocumented children to Children First as well. Approximately 260 families were called and 70 appointments were made.

Of the 70 children the organization made appointments for, 52 (74%) kept their appointments and received care. All 30 children appointed at the practice in Delaware County kept their appointments. Disturbingly, just over 50% (or 27) of the children had more serious oral health needs than in previous years, and both practices invited the children to make follow up appointments for further treatment. The practice managers described that a few of the children required sedation with surgery that would be cost prohibitive for the families and costly for the



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practices to provide for free. Since the children are undocumented immigrants and not eligible for regular Medicaid, Children First is working with the practices and the families to try and secure Emergency Medical Assistance for this dental work.

The 2022 Give Kids a Smile event was another rousing success, and was made possible by the generous support of the PA Coalition for Oral Health and the Oral Health Plan Mini Grant Program.

<p><b>FREE DENTAL CARE FOR CHILDREN &amp; TEENS!</b> May 6<sup>th</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022</p>  <p><b>Give Kids a Smile!</b></p> <p>Participating dental offices providing free dental care in the region.</p> <p><b>Call for Appointments Starting April 25th</b> 215-563-5848 x21</p> <p>Give Kids a Smile is for children 15 and under who don't have insurance. <i>No Insurance? No problem!</i></p> <p>For more information: Email: <a href="mailto:gksd@pccy.org">gksd@pccy.org</a></p> 	<p><b>¡ATENCIÓN DENTAL GRATUITA PARA NIÑOS Y ADOLESCENTES!</b> 6 y 7 de mayo de 2022</p>  <p><b>Give Kids a Smile!</b></p> <p>Consultorios dentales participantes brindan atención dental gratuita en la región.</p> <p><b>Para hacer una cita, llame desde 25 de abril</b> 215-563-5848 x21</p> <p>Give Kids a Smile es un programa para niños y jóvenes de hasta 15 años que no tienen seguro. <i>¿No tiene seguro? ¡No hay problema!</i></p> <p>Para obtener más información: Email: <a href="mailto:gksd@pccy.org">gksd@pccy.org</a></p> 
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