

Leading Change for  
Oral Health in  
Pennsylvania

## **2022-2023 Mini Grant Program Summary Report June 2023**

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In September 2022, the Pennsylvania Coalition for Oral Health announced recipients of the 2022-23 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 Dental Days*

Philadelphia County

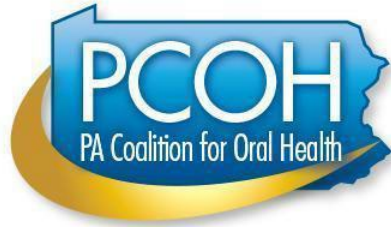
Plan Priority Addressed: Access, Prevention, and Education

With this project, Kids Smiles aimed to empower families with the knowledge, skills, and resources to establish a dental home for consistent clinical dental care and to elevate the oral health literacy of the families and communities Kids Smiles serves.

This grant had a significant impact on the children and families served during the Dental Days program. During the grant period, Kids Smiles established a new partnership with the Universal Charter School system. Through the partnership, they are scheduled to provide dental exams and chairside education to six campuses over seven visits. The children enrolled in Universal Charter Schools are at high risk of suffering from tooth decay and its consequences. The schools enroll 100% economically-disadvantaged students with a significant number of students who are English language learners.

During the reporting period, Kids Smiles held Dental Days at three Universal Charter School campuses.





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During the Dental Days our outreach team provided dental exams and chairside education to 158 children. They recorded a decay rate of 46% among the children who received exams and 53% of those with decay presented with an urgent dental need.

The project was modified from the original plan due to scheduling issues with CHOP Early Head Start. CHOP EHS was unable to schedule their first Dental Day until May 31<sup>st</sup>, after the reporting period. Kids Smiles updated the project plan by adding another Dental Days partner- Universal Charter Schools.



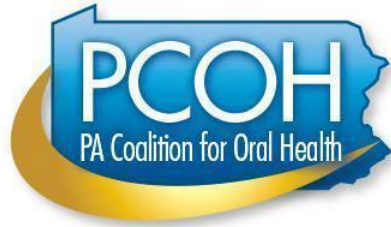
The outreach team provided three Dental Days to Universal Charter Schools during the reporting period and scheduled the first CHOP EHS Dental Day for May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Another update was that the outreach team utilized a Kids Smiles dentist to perform the exams at the Universal Charter School Dental Days instead of a PHDHP. Kids Smiles' PHDHP is performing the dental screenings at the CHOP EHS Dental Days. The program elements (dental screenings/exams, chairside education, and dental supplies) remained the same as in the original plan.



The original objective of the Dental Days program was 100% of enrolled CHOP Early Head Start children would be in compliance with their dental exams at the completion of both Dental Days. Kids Smiles' outreach team will work closely with the CHOP Early Head Start staff to complete the case management process for children who present with decay or urgent need to ensure they receive the treatment they need.

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, Kids Smiles provided CHOP Early Head Start with its first Dental Day since 2019. There were 136 CHOP EHS enrolled families. Although 78% of enrolled families reported having a dental home, their dental compliance is only 35%. During the Dental Day, the CHOP EHS students and their siblings received a free dental screening, chairside education, oral hygiene products, and the opportunity to schedule a follow-up appointment at one of the Kids Smiles dental centers for continuing care.

This project helped support the 2020-2030 PA Oral Health Plan by increasing preventive oral health care (dental visit) for children, reducing the percentage of untreated decay in children, increasing the number of underserved children with an age one dental visit, and reducing the incidence of children receiving dental services under general anesthesia.



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**Sadler Health Center**

*Creating a Dental Workforce Pipeline - Forming a Business to Business Relationship with Penn Foster to Address Dental Workforce Shortages*

Cumberland and Perry Counties

Plan Priority Addressed: Workforce & Access, Prevention, and Education

With this project, Sadler Health Center sought to reduce dental assisting staffing shortages in their clinics. Due to staffing shortages in 2021, the number of potential patient encounters was reduced by 572 in the clinic.

The goal of the project was to create a workforce pipeline for dental assistants to fully support the dentist and allow them to work at their highest capacity.

With the funding, Sadler Health was not able to completely eradicate the workforce problem, they did make drastic improvements. From October 2022 to May 2023, they only had to reduce potential patient encounters by 102, compared to 572 in 2021.

The funds allowed Sadler Health Center to support three dental assistant trainees through a formal training program and prepare them for the National Entry Level Dental Assistant exams. The trainees were taught both the didactic and clinical skills needed to be successful dental assistants. The additional dental assistants allowed the clinic to provide dental care to more individuals. From October 2022 to May 2023, the clinic had 6,666 dental encounters and served a total of 3,294 patients.

This project helped support the 2020-2030 PA Oral Health Plan by increasing preventive oral health care, reducing the percentage of untreated decay in children, increasing access to oral health services for people residing in dental health professional shortage areas, and identifying gaps in oral health workforce and developing strategies to address them.