



Southeast Region

Washington Ozaukee Dental Society • Waukesha County Dental Society
Burlington Dental Association • Racine Dental Association
Kenosha County Dental Society • Rock County Dental Society

CONTACT: Carol S. Weber, APR, Director of Public Relations
PHONE: 414-755-4108 (direct)
E-MAIL: cweber@wda.org

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Wisconsin dentists donating \$719,000 in care to 6,250 children for Give Kids A Smile®

WEST ALLIS, WIS., Feb. 2, 2010 – An estimated 350 Wisconsin dentists will volunteer their time and skills, along with 934 dental team members, dental, hygiene and assisting students, faculty and community advocates, to donate more than \$719,000 in oral health care and education to 6,253 of the state's low-income children **this Friday, Feb. 5** and during upcoming weeks as part of the eighth annual [Give Kids A Smile®](#) children's dental access program.

Statewide, \$3.4 million has been provided in charitable dental care to 23,000 low-income children since 2003 when the [Wisconsin Dental Association](#) joined with the [American Dental Association](#) in launching GKAS during February's [National Children's Dental Health Month](#).

GKAS 2010 will be marked nationwide by 12,780 dentists joining with 36,490 other volunteers to provide care to 322,885 children at 1,983 events. These outreach projects vary from large-scale dental clinics delivering exams, cleanings and fluoride treatments to individual dentists providing fillings, extractions and crowns to underserved children in their private practices to dental professionals offering screenings and educational programs in various locations.

In Wisconsin, the WDA and member dentists work with the [state's Department of Health Services](#), local government agencies, public schools, Head Start, Boys & Girls Clubs and other youth and community organizations to identify low-income children with the greatest need for dental treatment.

GKAS activities are supported by significant corporate donations from Colgate-Palmolive Company, DEXIS® Digital X-ray and Henry Schein Dental. WDA Professional Services Division's The Dental Record makes children's dental record forms available to Wisconsin GKAS events.

The seven-county WDA Southeast Region will feature GKAS events in several communities this Friday. Activities scheduled for other dates or with available patient slots are specifically noted.

Brookfield

- Drs. James Rollefson and Edward Trochlell will send a member of their pediatric dental team to speak to 185 students at the Children's Learning Center, Heritage Christian School and **Pewaukee** Lake Elementary School about the importance of good nutrition, daily oral hygiene practices and regular

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dental visits.

- Seven Waukesha County Dental Society dentists and 14 dental team members will work together at Nemcek Family Dentistry on Brookfield Road to provide 50 low-income children with dental exams, X-rays and sealants. Children needing further treatment will receive charitable care in private dental offices in the coming weeks.

Evansville – Dr. Anna Botts and her Midwest Dental office team will welcome 20 children between the ages of 3 and 15 for preventive and restorative care.

Jackson – A member of Dr. Scott Charmoli's Jackson Family Dentistry staff will take the message about the importance of maintaining good oral health to 100 public and private school children in Slinger and Jackson on Feb. 8, 9 and 18. Each child will also receive a goody bag with personal oral hygiene products and educational materials.

Janesville

- Health Net of Janesville, a community health and dental clinic, has scheduled appointments with five children in need of preventive and restorative dental care.
- The five dentists and 17 staff at Robinson & Prijic Family Dental Associates on Randall Ave. will provide dental sealants, fluoride treatment, cleanings and restorative care to 90 children ages of 4 through 12 on Friday. Members of this dental practice team will also visit schools throughout the city during February, giving presentations on good dental health habits to as many as 2,000 children.

Kenosha – On **Feb. 10**, local dentists, including Kenosha County Dental Society members, will again join forces with dental assisting students to examine 135 Boys & Girls Club members at Gateway Technical College. Students will also receive instruction in good oral hygiene and healthy lifestyle practices.

Kewaskum – Once again, Dr. Stephen Van Ess and staff will provide dental exams, cleanings, and basic preventive care to 10 underprivileged Kewaskum School District students.

Racine County – An estimated 30 Racine Dental Association members and volunteer staff will partner with the nonprofit Health Care Network of Racine to provide 50 needy youngsters with critical dental care on **Thursday, Feb. 4**. The children will be examined at the clinic on GKAS day and then referred out to volunteers' private dental offices for follow-up care.

Union Grove – Fifty children will be welcomed to The Family Dentists on 15th Avenue for dental exams, cleanings, X-rays, preventive care and necessary restorative treatment.

Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease affecting American children – five times more common than asthma. The [National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research](#) reports 80 percent of tooth decay is found in just 25 percent of children, the majority of whom are in low-income families.

Moderate tooth decay during childhood restricts physical development, decreases the ability to learn and requires frequent emergency room visits and hospitalization. In some cases, untreated oral disease has been linked to more catastrophic illness, such as an abscess that led to a 12-year-old Maryland boy's death in 2007.

The WDA, ADA and [American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry](#) recommend children be examined by a

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dentist within six months of the eruption of the first tooth and no later than age 1.

According to a February 2005 [Children's Dental Health Project](#) report, low-income children who have their first dental exam by age 1 are less likely to visit emergency rooms for oral health problems or require restorative care. In addition, 5-year-olds who had their first dental visit at age 1 have incurred oral health-related costs at a rate about one-half that of their peers who don't see a dentist until age 5.

The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (physicians) calls for 20 percent of all health care funds spent on children to be directed at improving and maintaining their oral health.

In Wisconsin, about 1 million low-income children and adults, or 20 percent of state residents, are beneficiaries of Medicaid, BadgerCare and BadgerCare Plus programs at some point during a given year. State fee-for-service data for fiscal year 2006 (most recent available) shows that while medical assistance patients received \$74 million in dental care, the state and federal governments paid just \$32 million or 44 percent of those charges. This means dentists donated the remaining \$42 million in care to MA patients or more than the Wisconsin and U.S. governments combined paid for.

"GKAS and nonreimbursed MA care are just two examples of how [Wisconsin dentists do serve](#) their communities and make a difference for underserved children and adults through charitable care in their private practices and by volunteering at [community dental clinics](#), the [WDA Mission of Mercy](#) and other outreach programs," explains [WDA President Dr. Kent Vandehaar](#) of Chippewa Falls, Wis.

"However, charity alone is not a sufficient oral health care delivery system," Vandehaar points out. "Low-income patients suffer for various reasons: failure to care for their own oral health; inability to find a dental office for routine care, because small businesses can't absorb too much income loss; and, lawmakers' failure to sufficiently fund the dental care they have promised."

Despite access-to-care concerns for the underserved and medical assistance population, the [Kaiser Family Foundation "State Health Facts" Web site](#) shows 73.2 percent of Wisconsin residents had their teeth cleaned by a dental professional in 2008 compared to 71.3 percent nationally.

A [March 2009 USA Today article](#) ranks Wisconsin seventh in the nation in percentage of residents who have seen a dentist in the last 12 months.

Established in 1870, the Wisconsin Dental Association is headquartered in West Allis. With more than 2,900 members statewide, it represents the vast majority of practicing dentists in Wisconsin. WDA members are committed to promoting professional excellence and quality oral health care. The Southeast Region serves the counties of Kenosha, Ozaukee, Racine, Rock, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha. The WDA is one of 53 constituent (state-territorial) dental societies of the ADA - the largest and oldest national dental association in the world. For more information on the WDA, call 414-276-4520, visit our [WDA.org](#) Web site and find us on [Facebook](#).

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