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MEDIA ALERT: Photo Ops – February is [National Children’s Dental Health Month](#)

Editor’s Note: Most Wisconsin GKAS® events preregister children through agencies, schools and social service clubs. **Please do not indicate an event is open to unregistered children unless specified.**

Give Kids A Smile® providing local children with needed dental care for 10 years

WEST ALLIS, WIS., Jan. 31, 2012 – More than 5,650 low-income Wisconsin children will receive \$945,000 in donated dental care this Friday, Feb. 3 and during upcoming weeks, as part of the 10th annual [Give Kids A Smile®](#) children’s dental access program.

At least 475 Wisconsin dentists, along with 540-plus dental team members, dental, hygiene and assisting students, faculty and community advocates are volunteering their time and skills to get underserved children out of pain and treat dental disease with fillings, extractions and crowns. Other events involve dental health screenings, cleanings and oral hygiene education. GKAS® activities are taking place in private dental practices, large-scale clinics, classrooms and community centers in at least 55 communities statewide.

The [Wisconsin Dental Association](#) and member dentists work with the state’s [Department of Health Services](#), local government agencies, schools, [Head Start](#) and youth and community organizations to identify low-income children in need of dental treatment.

[Baby teeth matter](#) to a child’s physical, social and emotional development. Kids can keep their back teeth – the ones they chew with – until their early teens.

Tooth decay is a serious and transmissible disease that can lead to infection without proper precautions. Early childhood cavities are four times more common than asthma and seven times more common than hay fever among America’s children according to the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services “Healthy People 2010” report](#).

In the Badger State, [DHS reports](#) 25 percent of Head Start children ages 3 and 4 have untreated decay and 33 percent have had cavities and now have fillings.

“The good news is childhood cavities are preventable,” says [WDA President Dr. Steven Stoll](#), a general dentist in [Neenah](#), Wis.

Since 2003, GKAS® events in Wisconsin have delivered \$5 million in free dental care to 34,281 youth.

“Charity isn’t an effective or efficient way of reducing barriers to dental care. Dentists are glad to donate their time and skills, but we also want to work with lawmakers to help the state make [‘Healthy Choices’](#) for the long term,” Stoll adds.

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10 YEARS OF FREE DENTAL CARE FOR WISCONSIN KIDS – 2

GKAS® activities are supported, in part, nationwide with donations from [Henry Schein Dental](#), [Colgate](#) and [DEXIS®](#). [WDA Insurance and Services Corp.](#) offers pediatric dental forms to Wisconsin GKAS® events through [The Dental Record](#) under its Professional Services Division.

For more information on the WDA, call 414-276-4520, visit our [WDA.org](#) website or find us on [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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