Vote for “Kids”

Thousands of caring individuals have “voted for kids” by volunteering at Give Kids A Smile clinics for 10 years! The caring spirit of each clinic has been evident in the smiles of the children. Many of you have elected to volunteer at the 21 past dental clinics. Those 2-day events have been accomplished with the help of nearly 8,000 volunteers! The 21 GKAS clinics have provided over 11,000 children with more than $5 million in services.

Incredible as that seems. What is more incredible is that you continue to “vote for kids” by caring to volunteer again and again. For that we thank you. As we prepare for the 22nd clinic on October 26 & 27, 2012, let us reflect on the past. Give Kids A Smile began in St. Louis in 2002. We are now the model community outreach program for the American Dental Association. We have added more services for our kids including the Tiny Smiles area of the clinic. That area of the clinic treats our smallest patients. Their caregivers are provided education and supplies for oral health practices in the home which positively impact the overall health of all family members. We have volunteer dental offices that serve as our Smile Factories so that no child goes untreated between the scheduled clinics. In addition, more than ever, we are reaching into the community and helping kids through our oral health efforts to assist other organizations such as Nurses for Newborns and St. Louis Cardinals Redbird Rookies.

My what an impact your vote has made! By electing to sign up and volunteer at a Give Kids A Smile event or by simply supporting Give Kids A Smile through donations and fundraisers—You have changed the lives of so many children. Every child deserves a healthy, happy smile. Elect to care and vote for kids by supporting Give Kids A Smile.

A Give Kids A Smile HERO

An annual award has been established to honor some of our unsung heroes. The success of the Give Kids A Smile organization is attributable to the more than 8,900 dental professionals and lay volunteers who unselfishly give of their time and talents. To honor these unsung heroes, we have created the “GKAS Hero” award which will be given annually at the Greater St. Louis Dental Society Installation. We are proud to announce that the first recipient of this award is John P. Vogl, DDS of Manchester, Missouri. He received this award on January 14, 2012. Dr. Tom Flavin, president of GKAS, stated, “Dr. Vogl represents everything that is good about GKAS. He is gentle, caring and a dedicated dentist who we have come to count on at nearly every clinic since 2002. Thanks to his generous spirit more kids are smiling! Congratulations.
President Tom Flavin Speaks---

I love Autumn, it’s my favorite time of year! Gone are the long, hot, lazy days of summer and in are the sun shortened, cool, busy days of Fall! It’s time for us to get down to business. It’s Nitty Gritty time at the Central Office. Everything we do is in preparation for the October clinic and the transformation of the beautiful but staid Center for Advanced Dental Education at SLU into the highly energized and well coordinated carnival of dental care we call Give Kids A Smile!

Since our inception we have provided comprehensive dental care to over 10,000 children in the GSL area, while our comrades across America have treated millions more! It is humbling to think it all started here in St Louis. This coming clinic we will once again welcome a dedicated group of GKAS leaders from across the U.S. They are coming to see how we do things in St Louis, in hopes of being inspired with new ideas and strategies they can use back home in their own programs. It is an incredible honor to have them here and humbling to be chosen to help them. I will say we are likely to learn as much from them as they will from us.

One thing I do know that will be so very evident to them, is the immense generosity of our volunteers. The love that is in their hearts is the fuel that powers our clinic! Every single one of you is a blessing of immeasurable depth. I am looking forward to seeing you all at the October clinic. Without each and every one of you there wouldn’t be a GKAS, and the children that require our help would go untreated. God knows we get more out of this than the kids do! That is why I am asking those of you who have not volunteered in the past to consider becoming involved this year. Many hands make light work and I promise you that you will be greatly rewarded for your generosity.

Dr. Thomas Flavin
GKAS President

Give Kids A Smile
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Kids Giving To Kids

A Special Thanks to the kids and staff of Sappington Elementary in the Lindbergh School District.
Their Clothing Swap Fundraiser raised $116.00 for Give Kids A Smile.

Another Special Thanks to the Parkway Central High School’s Community Service Club and Student Council
Which raised $279.11 for GKAS.
We commend these wonderful students.
THANK YOU!!
GKAS Board message:

THE SYSTEM NEEDS WATER

As we approach the fall of the year, things are finally starting to cool off. And I hope all of you have been able to enjoy the hot summer we had. The heat has taken its toll on many things this year: farmers’ crops to the lives of the elderly. It’s makes us aware of how precious water is to our bodies and everything around us. We need it to nurture and cultivate our crops, grass and plants as well as provide nourishment and energy to our bodies. Without water nothing grows. It is essential for survival.

Our volunteers for Give Kids a Smile are our “watering” system. Without them we could not survive. You who volunteer your valuable time to help make GKAS successful are very much appreciated. We need you to continue to develop and expand that involvement to include others. Tell your friends and co-workers about GKAS and get them to volunteer. Everyone should be doing this: doctors, hygienists, assistants, business staff and lay volunteers. Everyone is needed. There is no job too small or too big. Everyone has a place at GKAS.

The success of our St. Louis GKAS has had a tremendous impact on the lives of thousands of children in the area. Your volunteering has “watered” their lives with many blessings. Some of those we may never see or imagine. When you touch a young person’s life and make him/her feel better, you make a difference. The simple holding of a hand or a kind, gentle word, or calming gesture to a frightened child can have a huge impact on their life.

As you volunteer at a GKAS clinic you will be affected too. You will notice a difference. You will see a change.

Now as the weather cools off, we are heating up at Give Kids a Smile. The next clinic is just around the corner, October 26 and 27. We already have over 400 children signed up and school is just starting. So spread the word and

TURN ON THE WATER.

Call the GKAS office now. See you in October.

Mark M. Ortinau DDS, FAGD, FICD
Vice President GKAS

Sign up to Volunteer at the GKAS Dental Clinic

On October 26 & 27, 2012

Call Patti or Joan at 636-397-6453
Or visit our website at www.gkas.org

Support GKAS by donating and—

Purchasing tribute cards for birthdays, anniversaries, in sympathy, etc.

Swiping this regularly!
Executive Director’s Economics

Finding it difficult to make ends meet? I am sure that many of our volunteers and supporters are working extra hard to survive financially. Give Kids A Smile is doing the same. As a Not-for-Profit, we completely rely on the generosity of our supporters and community partners. In the past, finances were better for everyone and more people had money to donate to many causes. Now, as the economy has tightened so has the reach of many who would like to donate. They either can only choose one or two causes for their charitable giving or none at all.

If you are able to donate, we are asking you to select Give Kids A Smile for your charitable giving. Attached to this newsletter is a donation envelope for your convenience. We would like to acknowledge those that give their tax-deductible donations to our 2012 Pledge Drive by placing their names in our upcoming 2013 Newsletter.

Please consider giving now.

The obvious question is why should I give. Well, if we consider the economics of the times—more children need our help than ever before. An example is a call that we got from a school nurse just the other day. She had a child in pain, a family who could not afford dental treatment and no where else to call. Of course we were not going to let a child suffer in pain and miss any more school hours if possible. Through our network of smile factory offices, we were able to get the dental help the child needed. Within a day, the same child was able to come back to the school nurse and show off his new happy, pain-free smile. Give Kids A Smile is able to help thousands of local area children each year. Your donations go directly to the treatment of children in the St. Louis region. Annually, Give Kids A Smile provides over $1 million in dental care and related services to area children.

Aren’t their healthy, happy smiles worth it! Please give generously. Share this message with others too. Let everyone know that oral health is an important cause and every child deserves to be able to smile.

Thank You
Joan L. Allen
Exec. Director

GKAS University has New Name

GKAS University is now the GKAS Community Leadership Development Institute. At the October 2011 dental clinic, the American Dental Association in partnership with Give Kids A Smile—St. Louis established the GKAS University to train community leaders nationwide. The efforts and success of the 1st GKAS University and its scholars has led to a bigger and more extensive approach to Give Kids A Smile activities and participation.

Continued and new corporate support from Henry Schien, ADA Foundation and Hu-Friedy is leading the efforts to increase the development of this initiative. Their support is allowing the institute to provide newer approaches like a webinar to impact GKAS events and oral health initiatives in unique ways.

The October 2012 GKAS Community Leadership Development Institute will bring 10 new scholars from across the U.S. to St. Louis. Their 4-day training session will include hands-on participation at the GKAS–St. Louis dental clinic along with a presentation by Monica Chavez, a GKAS scholar from 2011. Her reflections on the experience of the first institute in 2011 and the resulting changes made at the Give Kids A Smile event in Tri-County Dental Society events in California will be presented.

We are very excited to welcome our new scholars to the GKAS–St. Louis clinic on October 26 & 27. We hope that their experience with us will lead to more children nationwide who enjoy the benefits of a Give Kids A Smile event and receive healthy smiles for a lifetime.
2012—Volunteers and Supporters

HEALTH FAIRS

CLINICS

PUBCRAWL

TRIVIA

COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

GOLF

FUNDRAISERS
Ali Galzki, MS, RD

I moved to St. Louis in the fall of 2010 to begin graduate school and my Dietetic Internship at Saint Louis University after completing my Bachelors in Nutrition at the College of Saint Benedict in Central Minnesota. I was in the Pediatric track of SLU’s Dietetic Internship Program so many of my clinical, community, and foodservice management rotations were focused at pediatric nutrition facilities. Additionally, I had the opportunity to volunteer at the Give Kids a Smile dental fair in February 2011 which is what sparked my interest in the relationship between nutrition and dental health in young children.

Being a part of GKAS was an inspiring experience. Growing up I was fortunate enough to receive regular dental care so GKAS completely opened my eyes as I witnessed many children receive dental care for the first time in their lives. It was humbling to watch professionals volunteer their time and expertise to children in need of care, and it encouraged me to delve a little deeper into how nutrition professionals might be able to play a larger role in the process. As dietetic interns we met with families of young children to discuss their nutrition and feeding behaviors as well as to measure and weigh the children to plot them on their age-appropriate growth chart. Additionally we provided education materials and healthy recipes to parents and children after they had received care.

During the GKAS process, the families were asked questions about medical, nutrition, family history, and dental hygiene related topics, and the data was recorded on a standardized form. Although data had been collected for years and used for program planning and targeting nutrition education for families, the data had never formally been summarized. This sparked my curiosity as I wondered what the data might tell us – how can we use it to increase awareness and provide better care to children who attend GKAS? Thus, I decided that I would use the GKAS data to complete my Masters degree research project. The focus of my research was how infant and child feeding practices (namely breast feeding, bottle feeding, and sippy cup use) affected dental outcomes in children under five years old (Tiny Smiles Clinic participants).

I used data from the October 2011 and February 2012 clinics in my analysis. Almost two-thirds of the 76 Tiny Smiles participants in my study presented with dental plaque, spots/stains, and/or decay/cavity. Those who breastfed more than six times per day, used a sippy cup, and/or used a bottle past one year of age were more likely to present with one or more of these negative dental health outcomes. Dental health problems can have distressing consequences both financially and emotionally so the results of this study were alarming.

This led me to the conclusion that children need to be screened at an early age for dental health issues, and parents should be educated early in their child’s life (if not before birth) about how to properly feed their child in order to prevent future dental problems. Although GKAS does an incredible job serving as many children as they can, this study brought to light the critical need for more public health programs to address this important issue. Many dental health problems are preventable, but educating caregivers about the importance of proper nutrition practices, oral hygiene behaviors, and dental care is essential.

The research article I completed is called “Feeding practices and dental health outcomes in children” and is currently undergoing editing to be re-submitted for publication. Dental health issues in young children are on the upswing, and my hope is that this research will increase awareness of the significance of this issue and spur a call to action from professionals of different disciplines across the health field.
We know that ALL of our volunteers are champions. In addition to their volunteer efforts many of the volunteers have worked in other capacities that are very important but often overlooked. Give Kids A Smile is grateful to all of our volunteers and is trying to make an effort to recognize those that have taken on leadership roles and have continued their service with us for many clinics. The dentists are recognized in our Heroes Awards so this one is for all of the others who make Give Kids A Smile clinics possible. Below is the first recipients of this acknowledgement of gratitude for their efforts for the kids. THANK YOU!

MARY SIGNORINO

KATHY BIRMES

KATE CHATFIELD

DEBBY MITTENDORF

JIM EDWARDS

RACHEL BARTON

VICKI COY

NATALIE RUETER & BECKY GRUBAUGH

SHARON MATTINGLY
Mark Your 2013 Calendars!

March 1 & 2, 2013--Dental Clinic
April 26, 2013--Trivia Night—
June 3, 2013--Golf Tournament
Sept. 21, 2013—GKAS Soulard Pubcrawl
October 25 & 26, 2013--Dental Clinic

A Special Thanks

Give Kids A Smile is supported by many foundations, organizations and individuals. Without their financial and In-kind support, our free dental clinics and services could not be rendered. We are sincerely grateful. Here are just a few of the many supporters we would like to thank at this time--

Daughters of Charity Foundation of STL
Employees Community Fund of Boeing St. Louis
St. Louis University—CADE
St. Louis Cardinals Care
ADA Foundation/CIGNA Foundation
Missouri Foundation for Health
Delta Dental of Missouri
United Way one-time grants

Mail donations to:
GKAS, 340-A Mid Rivers Mall Dr., St. Peters, MO 63376.

Call at 636-397-6453 to make a credit card donation.