



Your COMMUNITYHEALTH CONNECTION

A Newsletter of Community Health Connect

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Give Kids A Smile 2009

On February 14th Community Health Connect, along with volunteer dentists, hygienists, and others participated in the second annual Give Kids A Smile Day in Utah County. The event was a huge success thanks to the many individuals that donated their time and services. This year 107 children received dental work and cleanings, almost double the number of kids that were served last year. Give Kids A Smile (GKAS) is part of the National Children's Dental Health Month sponsored by the American Dental Association, Colgate and Henry Shein. The GKAS event helps raise awareness about children's oral hygiene and the important role good oral health plays in a child's development.

Many parents and children are not aware of the adverse effects of tooth decay, cavities and gum disease. Poor dental health can lead to absenteeism, impaired speech development, chronic pain, infections, low self-esteem and



A Give Kids A Smile Patient happy about receiving services

A special thanks goes to Dr. Ken Molen for donating the Utah College of Dental Hygiene facility for the event. Brent Molen also spent many hours coordinating the event and organizing the hygiene students. The hygiene students were wonderful. They were well prepared and did a great job with the cleanings. Thanks again to everyone at the Utah College of Dental Hygiene for all your help.

This year Dr. Albert Clark, the lead dentist for the event and the Provo District Dental Society chairman for the GKAS event, along with Dr. Ross Cheesman, from Community Health Connect, took on the responsibility of recruiting dentists. As a result of their efforts we had 11 dentists and many dental assistants at the event working all morning. We are very grateful for the support and enthusiasm these dentists brought



Dr. Schiffmen and his assistant work on a Give Kids A Smile patient at the event

malnutrition. Dental disease is a problem that plagues 50% of children in Utah ages 6-8. In order to combat this high rate of disease, Give Kids a Smile helps to educate parents and children about the value of proper dental hygiene and its importance to their overall health.

At this years GKAS event children and parents learned about the importance of fluoride, flossing and brushing, and other topics. Several hygiene students from the Utah College of Dental Hygiene spent time preparing educational displays that helped children and parents better understand the importance of oral hygiene. Dr. Sorenson from American Fork also attended the event and spent time educating families one on one. Thank you to all our educators.



Patients making personalized thank-you cards for the volunteers at the event

Inside this issue:

- Generosity is Catching 2
- Volunteer of the Quarter: Elsie Lopez 3
- Provider Spotlight: Chris Biesenger, NP 3
- About CHC 3
- Provider Spotlight: Joseph Gee, DDS 4

Samantha has expressed her gratitude to all those involved in helping her make a quick recovery.

Generosity Is Catching

Samantha, a successful high school student, was making plans to celebrate her 17th birthday, when she was confronted with troubles at home and severe knee and ankle injuries. But what followed can only be seen as bright silver linings outshining those dark clouds.

A good neighbor of Samantha, orthopedic surgeon Dr. Mitch Larsen from Central Utah Clinic, came to visit Samantha and her mother LeeAnn. Realizing the difficult times the family was having, and the unpredictable finances they faced, he immediately offered to take Samantha's case at no charge.

When he determined that multiple



A Smiling Samantha

surgeries were needed, he made arrangements at Utah Valley Re-

gional Medical Center to repair both her knee and ankle. Dr. Larsen's friend and colleague, anesthesiologist Dr. Brandon Dial, offered his services as well. Her mom LeeAnn tells us that Dr. Larsen had to rebuild Samantha's completed ruined ACL twice during surgery.

Samantha is healing well and working out with a physical therapist to get back into shape. She and her mother expressed heartfelt gratitude for Doctors Larsen and Dial, and for the staff at Community Health Connect. Successful cases like this make donating one's time and service worthwhile.

Give Kids A Smile (continued)



Volunteers at Give Kids a Smile

with them to the event. We'd like to thank all participating dentists: Doctors Albert Clark, Quinn Schiffman, Darren Gardner, Gary Weist, Jared Condie, Reed Robinson, Noelle Wilhelmsen, Eric Toller, Jason Allen, Douglas Ball and Wes Cardall.

Children that did not see a dentist the day of the event or who needed additional work done later were given vouchers for free dental care. These vouchers are an important part of the events success. A special thanks to all those dentists who donated vouch-

ers. Thank you Doctors Donald Dodge, Albert Clark, Darren Gardner, Larry Francis, Kyle Marshall, Chris Crawford, Richard Leishman, Jared Hill, John Capua, Craig Christiansen, Rosger Harding, Scott Healy, Branton Richter, Pane Nielsen and Daryn Moody.

Because of the time and services donated by dentists, hygienists, volunteers and the donation of the facility from the Utah College of Dental Hygiene the event was an even bigger success than last year! Because of all the wonderful resources available here in Utah

County, 107 needy children were able to receive dental care. We are excited about the increase in overall participants this year and anticipate growth and momentum in the coming years.

For more information about next year's event please contact Ross Cheesman at (801) 818-3016.

www.utahgivekidsasmile.com



Dr. Gardner and his wife Helen after providing care to a Give Kids A Smile Patient