Give Kids A Smile
2003-2015
As tears are streaming down my face, I thank you for being put in our lives at a time when we needed to ask for help. Not only did [our granddaughter] get the dental care she needed, but she received it with such love, care and a SMILE.

Grandparent of a GKAS patient
From 400 Kids to More Than 5 Million

In 2002, Drs. Jeff Dalin and B. Ray Storm held the first Give Kids A Smile® (GKAS) event in a run-down, soon-to-be-demolished dental clinic in St. Louis, where 15 patient chairs were scraped together to deliver free dental care to nearly 400 children.

The American Dental Association (ADA) recognized that this grassroots effort had great potential to raise awareness nationally about the importance of oral health to overall health, and about the staggering need that exists among millions of children who go without care. So in 2003, Give Kids A Smile evolved into a nationwide program with the collaboration of the ADA, Henry Schein, Procter & Gamble, and DEXIS.

Today, Give Kids A Smile is the ADA Foundation’s signature access to care program, with events taking place throughout the year. These events kick off annually on the first Friday in February, which is Give Kids A Smile Day. Thousands of dentists and volunteers give their time to provide free oral health education, screenings, and treatment to underserved children.

Since 2003, more than 5 million children have been cared for by more than half a million volunteers.

“It gives me chills to think that millions of children have received care they normally would never have had. They will be able to eat and sleep better, have better self-esteem, do better at school and not be in pain any longer.”

– Dr. Jeff Dalin, GKAS Co-Founder
All of you have made a profound difference in my life and my daughter’s life. Because of all of you, she will not have to suffer in pain or lose her pretty smile; and I will not have to watch her endure it.

Parent of a GKAS patient
Why GKAS?

According to the Centers for Disease Control, nearly one in four children under the age of five already has cavities*. And a disproportionate share of tooth decay, approximately 80 percent, is suffered by our poorest children**.

Although tooth decay is largely preventable, it remains one of the most common chronic diseases of children aged 6 to 11 years (25%), and adolescents aged 12 to 19 years (59%)*. Tooth decay is four times more common than asthma among adolescents aged 14 to 17 years (15%)*. That’s why the objectives of Give Kids A Smile are so important:

1. To provide care for, and find dental homes for, as many underserved children as possible, because every American deserves access to oral health care.

2. To raise awareness among the public and policymakers that access to dental care is a serious problem for many in this country, and no amount of charity care can solve the problem.

*Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
**American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

“In underserved communities, children go without any dental care, risking not only their smile, but their physical health as well. That is simply unacceptable.”

– U.S. Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.)

Give Kids A Smile remains a critical piece of the ADA’s Action for Dental Health, a nationwide, community-based movement aimed at ending the dental health crisis facing America today. It is designed to address the dental health crisis in three distinct areas:

1. Provide care now to people who are suffering from untreated disease;
2. Strengthen and expand the public/private safety net; and
GKAS by the Numbers

GKAS coordinators estimate that in thirteen years, nearly 5.5 million children have been cared for in GKAS events by more than half a million volunteers including dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, dental technicians, dental students, teachers, parents, school nurses, and many other community health professionals. Events have occurred in all 50 states, providing services from oral health education to clinical treatment. Volunteers give their time because they want to serve their community, but also because they want to end kids’ needless suffering from dental pain and teach them good oral health habits for a lifetime.

Number of GKAS Events by Participant Type* in 2015

*Participant type as selected in GKAS enrollment system

**Includes Individual Dentist/Student, Multi-Dentist Practice/Clinic, Corporate Dental Practice
13 YEARS of GKAS

5.5 million CHILDREN TREATED

130,000 DENTISTS

395,000 VOLUNTEERS

5.5 million children

10,000 dentists

50,000 volunteers
We are very proud of what the Give Kids A Smile program has done to improve the health of millions of children over the years. We want to make this an even bigger and better initiative in the future, and the key to that is to learn from the experiences of our volunteers who organize and carry out these events. We are very grateful for their time, and for all that they do every year.

Reneida Reyes, D.D.S., M.P.H.
President, ADA Foundation
National Distribution of GKAS Events in 2015

TOP REASONS to Volunteer for GKAS

92% ENGAGE IN COMMUNITY SERVICE
78% TREAT PATIENTS’ CURRENT ORAL HEALTH PROBLEMS
65% EDUCATE UNDERSERVED KIDS ABOUT ORAL HEALTH

Source: 2011 GKAS Dental Volunteers Survey
Donors: the Heart and Soul of GKAS

Bringing dental care to underserved children is not a problem the government or organized dentistry will fix alone. It will take all of us — the hearts and souls of the entire community — working together to solve this problem.

Although GKAS started as the vision of two, it has taken the hearts and souls of many to reach 5.5 million kids in 13 years. And it will take many more to prevent and eliminate cavities in children.

Thank you to our corporate sponsors who have contributed so much over the past 13 years. And thank you to all organizations and individuals, too numerous to name, who have made it possible to bring smiles to more kids.
Primary Sponsors of GKAS Day

Henry Schein Dental has served as the exclusive professional product sponsor of Give Kids A Smile Day for more than a decade. In 2015, through Henry Schein Cares Foundation’s in-kind donation program, Henry Schein and its supplier partners donated products and services valued at approximately $1.3 million to the Give Kids A Smile program.

Colgate has donated over $700,000 to the Give Kids A Smile program since 2008, as well as substantial in-kind donations throughout the year. In 2015 alone, Colgate contributed over 300,000 sets of Colgate Cavity Protection Toothpaste and Colgate Smiles Youth Universal Toothbrushes for children who participated in the Give Kids A Smile Day events all over the country.

Since the inception of the Give Kids A Smile program DEXIS has generously provided digital x-ray systems and staff expertise to facilitate the screening at Give Kids A Smile events.

“It’s really amazing how deep this has gone into dentistry and how wide it is. We have made a difference in this country for millions of children.”
– Stanley M. Bergman, Chairman and CEO of Henry Schein Inc.

“The GKAS program fits perfectly within [Colgate’s] efforts in supporting oral health care and education to children worldwide...”
– Dr. Fotinos S. Panagakos, Director of Clinical Research Relations and Strategy, Colgate-Palmolive Co.

“One vision, one kid at a time, one group of people who would not give up. It doesn’t get any better than this.”
– Candy Ross, Director of Industry and Professional Relations, DEXIS Digital X-ray Systems
Thank you to the following corporate sponsors for their support of GKAS programs from 2003–2015.

**CareCredit**

CareCredit is the founding donor of the ADA Foundation’s GKAS Fund and has contributed $100,000 annually since 2007.

3M

3M has supported GKAS/NASCAR® Oral Health Education events since 2011.

Arm & Hammer  
Cigna  
Colgate-Palmolive Co.  
Dental Trade Alliance Foundation  
DenTek Oral Care  
Henry Schein Cares  
Honda  
Hu-Friedy  
Procter & Gamble  
Rite Aid  
SS White/Gallop Foundation  
Wm. Wrigley Jr. Co.

And thank you to all those organizations and individuals, too numerous to name, who have made it possible to bring more smiles to more kids.
The Role of the ADA Foundation

In late 2014, Give Kids A Smile became the ADA Foundation’s signature access to care program, after existing as an American Dental Association program from 2003–2014. The ADAF not only provides oversight to the program, but also facilitates private support for the success of GKAS programs nationwide. Since the establishment of the GKAS Fund, the ADA Foundation has made grants in excess of $1.7 million in support of the program.

Among those projects supported by grants through the ADA Foundation are GKAS expansion activities and events across the country, GKAS/NASCAR® Oral Health Education events, the GKAS Community Leadership Development Institute, and the GKAS Ambassador Alumni Conference.

We are honored to continue working with CareCredit, the founding donor of the GKAS Fund. Their contribution of $100,000 a year for the past nine years has been critical to the success of the program. And we are very pleased for the continued contributions from 3M, Colgate, DEXIS, and Henry Schein. We extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our corporate and individual donors who have invested in this effort.

The ADA Foundation is continually working to find more corporate sponsors for GKAS and is also looking for individuals who would like to share their philanthropic motives in a way that has direct impact on hundreds of thousands — even millions — of children nationwide.

For more information about how to support the GKAS national movement, contact:

ADA Foundation
211 East Chicago Avenue  •  Chicago, IL  60611

Gene Wurth, Executive Director  Nicole Catral, Senior Manager
312.440.2819  Children’s Oral Health Programs
312.440.2858
Give Kids A Smile Community Leadership Development Institute

Since 2011, the GKAS Community Leadership Development Institute has offered a unique opportunity for GKAS program coordinators across the U.S. to share best practices, explore outreach enhancements, and learn new approaches to providing care to America’s underserved children.

Each year, ten travel grants are awarded to a select group of applicants (ambassadors) to enable them to attend a three-day training session in St. Louis, where Give Kids A Smile began. The mixture of group discussions and guided dialogue is complemented by the chance to see a well-developed program in action, and the ability to interact with volunteers, organizers, parents, and kids. The GKAS ambassadors then go on to serve as regional resources for other GKAS programs in their communities.

The program is sponsored by generous donations from Hu-Friedy and Henry Schein.

For more information on the GKAS Institute, visit adafoundation.org/gkas and click on Community Leadership Development Institute, or contact gkas@ada.org.

GKAS Map of Ambassadors by Region 2011-2014
Please join us in maintaining — and expanding — the wonderful work done by Give Kids A Smile volunteers over the years. We have helped millions of kids so far, but millions more need our help.

YOU can become part of this national movement.
“Give Kids A Smile is an opportunity to establish a trusting relationship with a child that leads to a lifetime of healthy, happy smiles. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to open the door to those in need so that they can learn the importance of oral health care.”

— Cavan Brunsden, D.M.D.
Recipient of the 2015 ADA Foundation Jeffrey Dalin, D.D.S.
Give Kids A Smile Volunteer Award

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