Give Kids A Smile Story

FROM 400 KIDS TO MORE THAN 7 MILLION

The Give Kids A Smile® (GKAS) program, launched nationally in 2003, provides underserved children with free oral health care. Each year approximately 5,000 dentists and 20,000 dental team members volunteer at local GKAS events to provide free oral health education, screenings, and preventive and restorative treatment to over 300,000 children.

The national kickoff of GKAS takes place annually on the first Friday of February. GKAS events are held throughout the year, across the U.S.

To date, over 7 million underserved children have received free oral health services through the GKAS program.

Vision
To ensure access to quality oral healthcare for ALL children.

Photo: GKAS 2017, Nova Southeastern University School of Dentistry

Why Give Kids A Smile?

According to the Center for Disease Control, cavities are the most common chronic disease of childhood in the United States. Untreated cavities can cause pain and infections that may lead to problems with eating, speaking, playing, and learning. Children who have poor oral health often miss more school and receive lower grades than children who don't.

Photo: GKAS 2019, UNC School of Dentistry

More than half of children aged 6 to 8 have had a cavity in at least one of their baby (primary) teeth.[1]

More than half of adolescents aged 12 to 19 have had a cavity in at least one of their permanent teeth.[1]

Children aged 5 to 19 years from low-income families are twice as likely (25%) to have cavities, compared with children from higher-income households (11%).[1]

[1] Source: *www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/childrens-oral-health/index.html*

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 the country, and no amount of charity care can solve the problem.
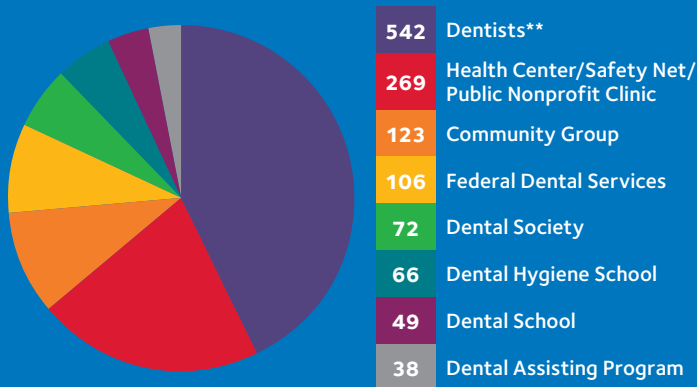
Volunteers
THE HEART AND SOUL OF GKAS

For the past 22 years, thousands of dentists, dental students and dental team volunteers have given their time to provide free oral health education, screenings, and treatment in their local communities. This is the essence of the ADA Foundation's Give Kids A Smile program—helping to ensure that every child has a healthy smile. Achieving this goal could not be possible without the commitment of our diligent GKAS program coordinators and volunteers. Thank you!

Number of GKAS Events by Participant Type* in 2023

542	Dentists**
269	Health Center/Safety Net/Public Nonprofit Clinic
123	Community Group
106	Federal Dental Services
72	Dental Society
66	Dental Hygiene School
49	Dental School
38	Dental Assisting Program

Photo above: GKAS 2024, Howard University College of Dentistry

Photo left: GKAS 2020, Indiana University School of Dentistry

* Participant type as selected in GKAS enrollment system
** Includes individual dentist, multi-dentist practice/clinic & corporate dental practice

TiNY SMiLES
A Give Kids A Smile Program

Tiny Smiles, an ADA Foundation Give Kids A Smile program, provides free resources to help raise awareness about the oral health needs of children ages 0 (birth) to 5. The main objective is to increase the number of dentists comfortable with and willing to provide oral health services to children by age 1.

For more information, visit **ADAFoundation.org/TinySmiles**.

Join the GKAS Movement
Are you interested in volunteering or hosting your own GKAS event? To learn how you can participate, email **GKAS@ada.org**.

To support the national Give Kids A Smile or Tiny Smiles programs, you can donate to the ADA Foundation by scanning the QR code on the right, or visit **ADAFoundation.org**.

Thank you to our generous corporate supporters
From donating oral health products to providing funding support and beyond. Give Kids A Smile would not be possible without their generosity.
Visit **ADAFoundation.org/GKAS** for more information and a list of our supporters.