



"Give Kids A Smile!" Planning Guide

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Welcome to “Give Kids A Smile!”

“Give Kids A Smile!” is the annual centerpiece to National Children’s Dental Health Month. On the first Friday in February, the nation’s dentists will provide free oral health care services to low-income children across the country and highlight for policymakers the ongoing challenges that disadvantaged children face in accessing dental care.

With the leadership of the North Carolina Dental Society and the efforts of thousands of volunteers, North Carolina has been part of “Give Kids A Smile!” since it began in 2003. NCDS works with a number of organizations to make the event a success, including the North Carolina Oral Health Section, the North Carolina Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, SmartStart (North Carolina Partnership for Children), the UNC School of Dentistry, North Carolina Community Colleges, and the North Carolina Dental Assistants Association.

Volunteers provide care to children from all 100 counties — whether it be dental treatment, prevention, and/or educational programs. Children are identified and pre-screened through public schools and local health departments. To date, more than 14,686 dental volunteers have provided over \$10.5 million in oral care to more than 123,251 children across the State.

Since “Give Kids A Smile!” is sponsored by the American Dental Association and the North Carolina Dental Society, we strongly encourage dentists and local dental societies to take the lead in planning “Give Kids A Smile!” events. We encourage you to work with other groups, such as the Oral Health Section, since they know a great deal about this patient population and can help identify and schedule patients, arrange for transportation, and help coordinate efforts with the public school system.

Recognizing that full-service dentistry is neither feasible nor appropriate in every case, GKAS welcomes virtually any activity that addresses the needs of underserved children, from tooth-brushing demonstrations, to group activities, to individual dentists providing comprehensive care in their own offices.

The North Carolina Dental Society invites you to join with us and make a difference for the children whose need is so great. For more information, contact Lisa Lawson at the North Carolina Dental Society, 1-800-662-8754, or llawson@ncdental.org.

Together, we can “Give Kids A Smile!”

Program Planning Guidelines

This Planning Guide contains information and timelines to help you plan and conduct GKAS events in your area. Much of the material was created by the ADA and is also available at www.ada.org.

There are seven steps to a successful GKAS event:

1. Select your planning committee
2. Decide whether you will have a small, medium, or large event
3. Plan your event
4. Promote your event
5. Conduct your event
6. Evaluate your event
7. Thank everyone who contributed to your event

Seven Steps to a Successful “Give Kids A Smile!” Event

Step 1 — Select Your Planning Committee

One of the keys to your success will be to build a committed, enthusiastic planning committee that will be responsible for overseeing program planning, budgeting, promotion, and in the end, evaluation and reporting. The planning committee will also be responsible for coordinating the efforts of your volunteers.

Consider inviting individuals from the following groups to serve on your planning committee:

- Dentists
- Dental Assistants
- Dental Hygienists
- Oral Health Section (Public health dentists and hygienists)
- School District’s Lead Nurse and School Nurses
- Members of the NCDS Alliance (spouses of NCDS members)
- Public schools
- Community colleges
- SmartStart
- Health departments
- Dental clinics

You may also wish to reach beyond the immediate dental community and include business or civic leaders, elected officials, non-dental healthcare providers, or the media. Even if their roles on the planning committee are mostly ceremonial, involving these people can help raise your event’s profile and enhance community awareness.

To create a successful event, individual committee members are often designated to manage various aspects of the planning process. Depending on your needs, planning committee positions might include the following:

- General Chairperson (often the designated GKAS County Coordinator) — Oversees meetings, development and implementation of event activities, budget, and record keeping.
- Arrangements Chairperson — Secures appropriate location for the event, arranges for any necessary supplies, equipment, and refreshments, and coordinates the identification, scheduling, and transportation of patients.
- Publicity Coordinator — Arranges for local media coverage of event. NCDS will conduct statewide publicity for the GKAS program and provide statewide press releases, as well as radio and TV public service announcements. See the GKAS Media Guide on this site for helpful information about publicity and working with the media.
- Media Spokesperson — Provides interviews to local newspapers, television and radio stations about your local GKAS event. This person should be a dentist. See the GKAS Media Guide for suggestions.
- Recruitment Chairperson — Recruits dental professionals and others who will volunteer their services at your event.

Step 2 — Decide Whether You Will Have a Small, Medium, or Large Event

GKAS events come in all shapes and sizes. Your planning committee will need to decide on the type of event that is appropriate for your area.

First, consider what has been done in the past. What GKAS events have been held in prior years? What worked well, and what should be changed?

Second, focus on what you can do now. Depending on your staff and budget resources, you may decide to hold a small, medium, or large-scale event. Don't be afraid to start small and focus on a few activities. You can build on your success in future years. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Small-Scale Events

- Offer presentations to schools where the majority of children are eligible for federally-funded meal programs. Choose your target audience: preschool, elementary school, middle school, or high school. Contact the school administrator, school nurse, or health or physical education instructor to make arrangements. Or give a talk at a community center that serves low-income families.

Focus your presentation on daily oral hygiene and diet and dental health. Set up an educational display. Use mouth models to demonstrate brushing and flossing; have a question and answer session. Handouts that students can take home can help reinforce oral health messages.

The ADA has developed “Smile Smarts!”, an oral health curriculum for pre-school through grade 8. We suggest that you refer to the “Smile Smarts!” curriculum to help develop presentations for children and their families. There are lesson plans, support materials, hands-on classroom style demonstrations, student activity sheets, and much more.

“Smile Smarts!” is available for immediate download from the ADA website at www.ada.org/goto/smilesmarts.

Medium-Scale Events

- Create a promotional mailing to the general dentists in your local dental society. Remind them that you are conducting a GKAS event and ask them to participate.
- Contact existing dental programs in your community, such as neighborhood free dental clinics, and see if they are interested in having special activities on GKAS day or joining with your society to conduct a special event.
- Reach out to children's and youth groups. SmartStart programs, YMCA/YWCA, faith-based youth organizations, and other groups have young members who can benefit from screenings, dental care, and educational activities.

Large-Scale Events

- Organizing a large-scale GKAS event in which disadvantaged children receive dental care brings special challenges, but the payoff in terms of numbers of children served, as well as exposure to the media and to legislators, can be significant.

- Step 3 identifies most of the steps necessary to make any large-scale event work, including: pre-identifying children through school nurses and other community groups; obtaining informed consent for exams/treatment; involving lay volunteers, such as spouses, dental students, and others to accompany each child during the event; providing information to the child and parent on how to obtain follow-up care; and contacting local civic groups and businesses to support your event.

Choosing a Site in Which to Deliver Clinical Care

- Keep in mind that providing care for children on GKAS day involves exclusively pro bono (free) services. If your GKAS event is going to provide clinical restorative and/or surgical services, select a venue that can accommodate a medium or large size event, and that will not need to bill any public program for services provided to eligible children in order to meet its budgetary requirements.
- Some publicly supported clinics (e.g. Federally Qualified Health Centers, community health centers, state and local government clinics) operate on a revenue-neutral, non-profit basis. These clinics may or may not be in a position to surrender a day of revenue from Medicaid reimbursement to be a GKAS site. Ask planning committee members, volunteers, partner agencies, and organizations for help in locating a suitable site to provide clinical services.

Step 3 — Plan Your Event

How will you identify children for your GKAS event?

If you will be giving oral health presentations in a school, the task is a straightforward one of identifying a school in which children are eligible for school lunch programs, for example. For screening events and those during which restorative care will be given, the question is more complex.

One of your most important decisions is whether to pre-identify children for your event (either by screening children prior to the day or by seeking referrals from school or community service groups), or to open your event on a first come, first served basis. All of your planning and promotion, as well as the practical logistics, depend on the answer to this question.

Pre-Identifying Children

Advantages:

- You can ensure that your physical facility can accommodate the children.
- You can identify enough volunteers.
- You will be able to plan for having supplies and equipment to meet the dental needs of the children.

Challenges:

- It requires more administrative work ahead of time to identify the children.
- Even when the children are scheduled ahead of time, they may or may not show up at their appointment time.

First Come, First Served

Advantages:

- Allows you to triage on site, giving the dental team more flexibility in treating the children.
- Patient expectations regarding how quickly they will be served may be more flexible.

Challenges:

- To alert the public about your event, this method requires pre-event publicity efforts such as advertising in local newspapers and reaching out to local media.
- There may be more people lined up than you have the capacity to serve that day, resulting in disappointment for the children and their parents.
- You may not know whether the children arriving for care are truly disadvantaged.
- While in either approach you may have dental team members standing around with nothing to do if enough people do not show up, this is usually more of a problem with the first come, first served approach.

Recommendation: Based on past experience, we strongly recommend that you pre-identify children to receive care.

Possible ways to identify children to receive care at your GKAS event include:

- The Oral Health Section (public health) staff performs risk assessments at public schools. Often there is no referral source for children needing care, and GKAS is an opportunity for these children to receive some level of care. Local dentists could provide care for a specific school or grade level.
- Dental professionals could provide “coupons” for fee dental care, to be distributed by public health dental staff to appropriate children .
- Clinics that provide free care for low-income clients can always use additional help. If a waiting or call list exists for a clinic, local dentists could volunteer to see a certain number of children in their offices or at the clinic for GKAS.
- Public health dental clinics or community health centers often target low-income clients. Local dental professionals could volunteer with these facilities.
- The Boys’ Club and Girls’ Club may be aware of members in need of dental care. Dental professionals could adopt a club and provide care for a limited number of children.
- Religious organizations may be aware of children in need of care. Contact these organizations to set up a time to screen potential children, and then schedule them to come to the office for care.
- School principals, counselors, social workers, etc., are often aware of children who have no financial resources for receiving dental care. Contact them to identify potential GKAS patients.

Plan to Obtain Proper Permission for Exams, Sealants, and Other Treatment

- Services provided during GKAS events have the same requirements for informed consent and HIPAA privacy notifications as do services provided in a dentist’s private practice.
- The full range of applicable GKAS consent forms and HIPAA notices is provided in the Consent Forms section of this site. Forms are available in English and Spanish.
- It is important to use the GKAS consent forms to protect the both the dentists and the patients.

Assess Your Budget

- After you have decided on the type of GKAS event for your area, assess your budget. Your budget may include postage, stationery, printing, gas or other transportation, dental products, brochures, or other handouts.
- Local sponsors for GKAS can be almost anyone that you do business with. Your planning committee may consider partnering with community agencies, civic groups, or other volunteer organizations. Some suggestions:
 - Dental supply companies. If you deal with a particular sales representative, contact them to see how they might support your project.
 - Civic organizations, such as Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, Junior League, etc.
 - Religious organizations
 - Fast food outlets, such as McDonalds, Hardees, Chick-Fil-A, etc.
 - Retail stores, such as Wal-Mart, Kmart, Target, etc.

Step 4 — Promote Your “Give Kids A Smile!” Event

- Even though NCDS will conduct a full-scale statewide effort to publicize GKAS, the best and most effective publicity will happen at the local level, in your own town. Your best sources of publicity are often your own patients, who may have some involvement, even indirectly, with organizations that can be of help.
- If you have patients and friends who are writers, editors, station owners or managers, or who are involved with the news media in some other capacity, alert them to your GKAS program and encourage them to cover the event. TV stations are especially interested in “interesting footage,” so if large numbers of children are expected, they should know about it.
- If you are a member of a local civic club or similar organization, consider presenting a short program on GKAS. These organizations can also be sources of funding or other sponsorship.
- Create opportunities for speakers to promote GKAS at local dental society meetings, conferences, or study groups. The most compelling presentation will be by someone who has had a positive experience at a prior GKAS event.
- Contact dentists in your area directly and ask them to volunteer with your GKAS event.
- Free, color posters advertising GKAS are available from NCDS and could be displayed in the offices of participating dentists. Deadline for ordering posters is November 14.
- NCDS will send statewide GKAS press releases to print media, as well as public service announcements to TV and radio stations across the state. Members of the North Carolina General Assembly will be invited to attend a GKAS event in their local area. If a reporter or legislator should attend your event, be prepared to greet them and show them around.
- See the GKAS Media Kit on this site for detailed information about publicizing your event and working with the media.

Step 5 — Conduct Your Event

Advance planning will help ensure that your GKAS event runs smoothly. While some logistical issues may be similar to other events you have conducted, the nature of a screening or direct care event presents some particular challenges. Here are a few tips:

- To avoid no-shows and dental staff standing around with nothing to do, consider over-booking. It can be very discouraging for staff to be ready to help and have no opportunity to do so.
- If you are providing prophylaxes and restorative care, assign a layperson to accompany each child for the entire time the child is in your facility. Many low-income children have very limited experience with dental care, and having a caring, attentive adult nearby can help put them at ease.
- A child's parent/legal guardian must give permission for all treatment, including exams and sealants. GKAS Consent Forms, in English and Spanish, are located in the Consent Forms section of this site.
- If space permits, have a craft and coloring table with materials related to dental health. It will help keep children occupied while they are waiting to be screened or treated. Activity sheets can be downloaded from the ADA website at www.ada.org/prof/events/featured/ncdhm.asp .
- Have staff dress up as a tooth fairy or clown to keep the children occupied while they wait and create an enjoyable atmosphere.
- If the facility in which you are delivering care is large, be sure that your volunteers who are coordinating care have cell phone with them, or rent a walkie-talkie system to avoid wasting time looking for someone.
- If reporters or legislators should attend your event, be prepared to greet them and show them around.

Step 6 — Evaluate Your Event

Knowing how well you met your program goals and objectives this year will be of great help for future planning. Consider the following questions:

- What oral health services were delivered? Use the GKAS County Report Form to track your totals and report them to Lisa Lawson at the NCDS office. We want to be sure your county receives proper credit in reports to the NCDS, ADA, the media, and the North Carolina General Assembly.
- What was the total dollar value of services and products delivered?
- Did you receive any donations? What goods were received, and what was their dollar value?
- Who were your target groups? How many children did you reach?
- What materials were distributed, and in what quantities?
- What types of publicity did you receive?
- How many volunteers did you recruit? How many hours did they contribute? Did you have enough people?

- How many people were on your planning committee? What were their roles? How many hours did each person contribute?
- What programs and activities did you sponsor and/or co-sponsor?
- What would make your event more successful next year?

Step 7 — Thank Everyone Who Contributed to Your Event

Last, but not least, remember to thank your planning committee and everyone who contributed their time and/or resources toward your GKAS event. A personal letter of thanks from the GKAS County Coordinator is a nice way to recognize these special people and encourage them to participate again next year.

Out-of-pocket expenses incurred in connection with a dentist’s volunteer work may be tax-deductible. Contact your tax adviser for further information.

GKAS Planning Timetable

A successful “Give Kids A Smile!” event takes planning and good organizational skills. This timetable will help you budget time and resources.

September

- Designate a GKAS County Coordinator, preferably a dentist with prior program planning experience.
- Appoint a planning committee. The most efficient working size for this type of committee is 5-9 people.

October

- Fill out the GKAS County Registration Form and return it to Lisa Lawson at the NCDS office by October 15 to register your event. We want to be sure your county receives proper credit in reports to the NCDS, ADA, the media, and the North Carolina General Assembly.
- Fill out the Order Form for NCDS Supplies and return to Lisa Lawson at the NCDS office to order free GKAS T-shirts, posters, and volunteer buttons. Please note that the deadline for ordering is November 14.
- Register your event with the ADA at www.ada.org/goto/gkas and request dental supplies from corporate sponsors. Please note that the deadline for ordering is November 14.
- Supplement these supplies and materials by contacting dental companies, local businesses, etc., for donations.

November

- Consider your options and decide what type of GKAS event will be suitable for your area.
- Decide how you will pre-identify the children who will receive care.
- Determine your budget. Solicit funding, if applicable.

- Order free supplies from NCDS by November 14.
- Request dental supplies from ADA corporate sponsors online at www.ada.org by November 14.
- Communicate your GKAS plan to dentists in your area. Encourage all NCDS members and non-members to support your GKAS event.

December

- Finalize budget and timetables.
- Recruit volunteers from your local society membership and from dental specialty groups and related dental organizations.
- Contact local public schools and health departments for help in pre-identifying low-income children for your event.
- Reserve any needed space, equipment, or other materials.
- Finalize details for each activity.
- Schedule speaking engagements with community groups.
- Secure any other vendors you may need for your event (caterer, sound system, balloons, etc.).

January

- Decide on three key points that you want to make about your GKAS event, in case a media representative contacts you for an interview.
- Members of the North Carolina General Assembly have been invited to attend a GKAS event in their local area. Extend a personal invitation to any legislators that you may know directly. If a legislator should attend your event, be prepared to greet them and show them around.
- Review final arrangements for your event.

February

- Conduct your “Give Kids A Smile!” event. Be sure to use the GKAS Consent Forms, located in the Consent Forms section of this site.
- Send a letter of thanks to everyone who assisted with your event.
- Review your event and note any changes that should be made for next year.
- Fill out your GKAS County Report Form and return it to Lisa Lawson at the NCDS office. We want to be sure that your county receives proper credit in information we report to the NCDS, ADA, media, and the North Carolina General Assembly.