



ADA American Dental Association®

# Program Planning Guide

## Program Planning Checklist



## Dear Program Planner:

The American Dental Association is pleased to provide you with the Give Kids A Smile<sup>®1</sup> (GKAS) Program Planning Guide. On Friday, February 3, 2012, the nation's dentists will provide free oral health care services to thousands of children from low-income families across the country. If you participated in GKAS in 2011, you were part of an effort that resulted in the delivery of more than \$22 million in dental education, screening, treatment and products to half a million children around the country by 45,000 volunteers. Congratulations! If you were not part of that exciting effort, now is the time to gear up for 2012!

GKAS is the centerpiece to National Children's Dental Health Month (NCDHM) and is observed every year on the first Friday in February. NCDHM focuses on providing oral health education to all children. GKAS was designed to provide free chairside education, screening, treatment, preventative and restorative care to children in need.

In addition to helping underserved children, Give Kids A Smile's intent is to highlight for law and policymakers the ongoing challenges that disadvantaged children and children with disabilities face in accessing dental care. The overarching message of GKAS is that even the high level of charitable care delivered by dentists every year will never solve the problem of untreated dental disease among the nation's children. So a major purpose of the project is to influence government and society at large to work with dentistry to craft common sense, market-based solutions to access disparities.

GKAS would not be possible without the generous support of our corporate co-sponsors, who provided more the \$4 million in products and services for the 2011 event. Our corporate partners for 2012 again are Henry Schein Dental, DEXIS Digital X-Ray and Colgate-Palmolive.

## A Little Background Information...

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The Give Kids A Smile name was first used by the Greater St. Louis Dental Society and a group of dentists who set up a temporary full-service clinic that treated nearly 400 children over two days in February 2002. The ADA's role in the national GKAS program is to function as an umbrella for the numerous charitable education, screening, prevention and comprehensive treatment programs already in existence by having as many of them as possible occur on the same day under the same brand. Further, the campaign provides a framework for identifying, cataloging and recognizing the many access activities—large and small—that take place throughout the year.

The ADA provides this Program Planning Guide and a full array of tools, many of them Web-based, to support the program and make it as easy as possible for volunteers to participate. The ADA also is working to ensure maximum positive coverage and perception by media, government and opinion leaders and to assist volunteers in those efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> Give Kids A Smile and the Give Kids A Smile Logo are registered service marks of the American Dental Association

## **Some Things to Think about as You Begin to Plan Your Give Kids A Smile<sup>®</sup> Event...**

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Whether conducting an access event is something you have done in the past, or whether it is a new activity for you, the keys to success are organization, planning, execution, publicity and evaluation. To help you sort everything out, this Program Planning Guide is divided into two sections:

- Program Planning Guidelines
- Program Planning Timetable

# Program Planning Guidelines

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Getting the most mileage for your Give Kids A Smile event will take planning and organizational skills. There are seven steps to a successful event:

- #1. Select your steering committee
- #2. Consider your options: education, screening, treatment/restorative
- #3. Plan your event
- #4. Recruit volunteers
- #5. Conduct your event
- #6. Evaluate your event
- #7. Thank everyone

## Seven Steps to Successful Promotion

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### Step #1: Select your steering committee

One of the keys to your success is to build a committed, enthusiastic steering committee that will be responsible for overseeing program planning, budgeting, promotion and evaluation. The steering committee also should coordinate the efforts of your volunteers.

Consider inviting individuals from any of the following groups to participate on your steering committee:

- **Dental and dental hygiene associations**
- **Dentists**
- **Dental hygienists**
- **Dental assistants**
- **Members of the Alliance to the ADA (spouses of dentists)**
- **Dental and dental hygiene school faculty and students**
- **Dental officers from local military bases**
- **School nurses**
- **Parents**
- **Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs)**

Try to reach beyond the immediate dental community and include business or civic leaders, elected officials, non-dental professionals, school officials, or the media. Even if their roles on the committee are mostly ceremonial, involving these people can help heighten your event's profile.

To create a successful campaign, individual committee members often are designated to manage different aspects of the campaign. Depending on your needs, steering committee positions may include the following:

- **General Chairperson:** Oversees meetings, program development, budget, record keeping and reviews the state dental practice act.
- **Program Chairperson:** Oversees development and implementation of program activities.
- **Budget Chairperson:** Manages the promotion budget.

- **Arrangements Chairperson:** Secures space for the type of access event being planned, audiovisual equipment, microphones and refreshments.
- **Publicity Coordinator:** Arranges for media coverage of access-to-care events by writing and sending press releases and feature articles; secures media placements for the media spokesperson.
- **Media Spokesperson:** Provides interviews to local newspapers, television and radio stations about the promotion and the particular activities your group is featuring.
- **Recruitment Chairperson:** Secures and organizes volunteer support.

## **Step #2: Consider Your Options: Education, Screening or Treatment Event**

Programs come in all shapes and sizes, and the first task of your steering committees is ask the questions below and to consider options.

1. What is the purpose of the program? (treatment, education, advocacy, etc.)
2. How large do we want the program?
3. How many patients can the program realistically see in a day?

### **Educational Event**

- Although oral health education can be part of GKAS Day, most classroom visits tend to fall under the umbrella of our National Children's Dental Health (NCDHM) program and can be made any day during the month of February (or indeed on any date convenient for the presenter). We suggest you visit [ADA.org/ncdhm](http://ADA.org/ncdhm) for more information. You may also want to contact your local or state dental society to join an existing program instead of planning your own.
- Offer presentations to schools where the majority of children are eligible for federally funded meal programs. Choose your target audience: preschool, grade school or teens. Contact the school nurse, health or physical education instructor or the school administrator to make arrangements. Or give a talk at a community center that serves low-income families.
- Focus your short presentation on daily oral hygiene and diet and dental health. Set up an educational display. Using mouth models, give demonstrations of brushing and flossing and have a question and answer session. Posters and handouts can help reinforce oral health messages. You can request free National Children's Dental Health Month posters by visiting the following link: [ADA.org/ncdhm](http://ADA.org/ncdhm)

### **Screening Event:**

Screening events can take place in a variety of locations. For example, dentists may choose to go to a Title I/reduced-cost lunch plan school and perform visual oral screenings on all 3rd grade students. The most important thing to remember when conducting a "screening only" event is to distribute a list of participating dentists/clinics who will treat (at no cost or low cost) those found to have dental needs.

## **Treatment /Restorative Event**

Organizing a large-scale Give Kids A Smile event that offers treatment/restorative care poses a number of challenges, but they are all surmountable, and the payoff in terms of exposure to the media and lawmakers can be significant.

Treatment/restorative events can take place in small or large programs. For example, individual dental offices and dental schools both have provided comprehensive treatment needs of GKAS participants.

### **Choosing a Site in Which to Deliver Clinical Care:**

Keep in mind that providing care for children on Give Kids A Smile Day involves exclusively pro bono (free) services. If your event will provide clinical restorative and/or surgical services, select a venue that can accommodate a medium or large size event, without billing you or any agency for the space or the services.

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. Those clinics may not be in a position to surrender a day of revenue from Medicaid reimbursement to be a Give Kids A Smile site and this is understandable. There are usually a variety of sites available where you can hold clinical events. Ask volunteers, partner agencies and organizations for ideas.

## **Step #3: Plan Your Event**

As you begin planning your event, answer these four questions:

1. What date is my event scheduled?
2. How will I identify disadvantaged children?
3. Where will I conduct my event?
4. Where can I get dental equipment and supplies?

### **1. What date is my event scheduled?**

Even though the national GKAS Day is celebrated on the first Friday of February, you can have your event any convenient day throughout the year.

#### **National Give Kids A Smile Day dates:**

2012	February 3
2013	February 1
2014	February 7
2015	February 6

### **2. How will you identify children for your 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 reduced-cost or free school lunches, for example. But 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 the event on a first come, first served basis. All of the planning and promotion, as well as the logistics, hinge on the answer to this question.*

### **Pre-identifying children**

#### Advantages:

- You can ensure that your physical facility can accommodate the children.
- You can line up enough volunteers.
- You can plan sufficient supplies and equipment to meet the dental needs of the children.

#### Challenges:

- More administrative work ahead of time is necessary to identify the children.
- Even when children are scheduled, some may not show up for their appointment

### **First come, first served**

#### Advantages:

- Allows you to triage on site, thereby affording 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 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 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, usually this is more of a problem with the first come, first served approach.

*In the vast majority of cases, pre-identifying children is the more manageable approach.*

To get more information about identifying children for your program, in the resource section download the section *Community Coalition-Building and Identifying Qualified Children for Give Kids A Smile*, which will give you more ideas about how to collaborate with other organizations.

### **3. Where will I conduct my event?**

#### Possible program locations:

- School gymnasium/auditorium (have back-up plan in case of bad weather which may cause the school to close)
- Dental school
- Dental Hygiene school
- Community health center
- Boys and Girls Club
- Shopping Mall

- Individual/Multi Dentist Practice
- Hospital
- State Capitol building
- Mobile Dental Van

#### 4. Where can I secure dental equipment and supplies?

Dental supplies from the GKAS Day generous sponsors must be requested online by **November 11, 2011**. Please visit the following link for more information: [givekidsasmile.ada.org](http://givekidsasmile.ada.org).

Each program is responsible for securing dental equipment and supplies for its own GKAS Day event. The ADA has secured a limited number of dental supplies from our national sponsors. There is a selection process for these supplies and every program may not receive product. (Go online at [givekidsasmile.ada.org](http://givekidsasmile.ada.org) 12-1-11 or after to see if you are free product recipient). Even if you are selected to receive product, you may need additional supplies and those should be lined up well in advance of your event.

##### **Possible places to secure donations**

- Dental sales representative that you purchase dental equipment and supplies from year around
- Local dental suppliers
- For a list of manufacturers of toothpaste and toothbrushes, please see the ADA Seal of Acceptance listings at: <http://www.ada.org/adasealproducts.aspx>

***Out-of-pocket expenses incurred in connection with a dentist's volunteer work may be tax-deductible. A tax advisor should be contacted for further formation.***

### **Step #4: Recruiting Volunteers**

*Information courtesy of Ms. Laura Barnard, communications director, Indiana Dental Association*

There are three basic areas to GKAS volunteerism:

1. Recruiting those interested in participating
2. Retaining those volunteers for future events
3. Researching the needs and wants of those who *do* and *do not* volunteer

When preparing GKAS volunteer recruitment materials, make sure to address the purpose of the program, the commitment needed, the benefits of volunteering (networking, advocacy, community involvement, etc...), and don't forget to include quotes from current volunteers about their participation.

Offer various volunteer levels so even dental offices that are unavailable for GKAS can participate. For example, an office could donate money to GKAS to purchase supplies for the patients and other volunteer offices. Some offices may be interested only in speaking to their local elementary schools, while others may choose to open their office and provide treatment for 30 children. Volunteers want the process to be as easy as possible, and through the help of a state dental association this can happen. A state organization can provide news articles, a volunteer application and a resource book for GKAS volunteers to follow.

Once a program has volunteers, the key is to retain them for the next event. Remember to thank all volunteers who participate. Write a personal thank you note to each volunteer office letting them know how much you appreciate their dedication and commitment to the program. This tactic takes time, but a personal note of appreciation can go a long way in keeping volunteers for the future. Other ideas include listing all volunteers in a state newsletter and/or Journal, and giving away a GKAS award to volunteers in recognition of their participation (5 years, 10 years, etc...).

This third point is extremely important to any GKAS program because coordinators need to understand what motivates dental offices to volunteer for GKAS and why others are hesitant to participate. By addressing the concerns of those not participating, coordinators can build their program and encourage more volunteerism through the program's ongoing changes. Let the potential volunteers know you understand their concerns and are researching ways to address them.

This same concept is true for current volunteers. If regular volunteers have concerns about the program, ask for their suggestions on improvements; let them be part of the solution to constantly improve the program. Dental offices that feel their opinions are heard are more likely to participate in future events.

## **Step #5: Conducting Your Event**

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

- To avoid no-shows and underutilization of volunteers, consider over-booking. It can be very discouraging for volunteers to be ready to help and have no opportunity to do so.
- If you are providing cleanings/prophylaxes and restorative care, possibly assign a layperson to accompany each child for the entire time the child is in your facility. Many children from low-income families have very limited experience with dental care, and having a caring, attentive adult nearby can help put them at ease.
- If space permits, have a craft and coloring table with materials related to oral health. It will help keep children occupied while they are waiting to be seen. Check the Resources section of this planning guide for activity and coloring sheets that can be reproduced for this purpose.
- Have staff dress up as a tooth fairy or clown to create an enjoyable atmosphere and keep the children occupied while they wait.
- If the facility in which you are delivering care is large, be sure that your volunteers who are coordinating care have cell phones with them or rent a walkie-talkie system to avoid wasting time looking for someone.

## **Step #6: Evaluate Your Event**

*Information courtesy of Ms. Molly M. Pereira, associate executive director, Colorado Dental Association*

Knowing how well you met your program goals and objectives this year will be of great help for future planning. Unfortunately, this important step often is overlooked. Below are the Do's and Don'ts tips for reporting and tracking your accomplishments.

### **Tips for Reporting and Tracking Statistics**

#### **DO's**

**DO** take the time to establish a reporting program that is unique to your state and your GKAS Day event(s).

**DO** make the forms available to your volunteers by e-mail, mail and fax. The more convenient you make the forms, the more people will use them.

**DO** send at least two reminder e-mails to your volunteers encouraging them to fill out the tracking forms and mail/fax them back to you.

**DO** stress to volunteers that this is your ONLY method of recording GKAS Day efforts, and without these forms, the association cannot determine an accurate account of donated services.

**DO** publish your results in an association publication to members and on your Web site. Volunteers like to know final numbers, and these numbers will encourage volunteer retention and further recruitment.

**DO** make a fact sheet for legislative and media use. This fact sheet should include a brief description of your state's GKAS efforts and report the successes from the program.

#### **DON'TS**

**DON'T** assume that your volunteers read everything that you mail to them. Be sure to have all GKAS instructions and forms in an easy-to-find place on your Web site.

**DON'T** assume that all of your volunteers are comfortable with technology. While you can also create an online reporting system, sometimes it is easier for the volunteer to have a hardcopy to fill out as they're treating the patient. Once they complete the forms, all they need to do is fax them in, rather than remember to report their successes online when they have a spare moment in the future.

**DON'T** let yourself be overwhelmed with the number of reporting forms that you receive back. While some data entry is needed to compile the reporting forms into one spreadsheet, the results are very valuable and worthwhile.

**DON'T** hound volunteers for their reporting forms, rather encourage them to fill them out and send them back. Be sure to explain the importance of those reporting forms. Once volunteers understand that GKAS isn't just a free day of dental care but rather a program to educate policy makers and the media, they're usually more than willing to do their part.

**DO** keep track of who sends their reporting forms back to you. While this is a little more time consuming, it will help you figure out whom you still need forms from and how accurate your statistics are based on how many volunteers those statistics represent.

Please share event data with the ADA. **The Association will compile information about national GKAS results, publicize it and share it with policymakers.** This step is essential if dentistry is to be able to call attention to its charitable efforts.

**Reminder! Be sure to go back to [givekidsasmile.ada.org](http://givekidsasmile.ada.org) and report your actual program results.**

### **Step #7: Thank everyone who contributed to your event**

Last but not least, remember to **THANK** all who contributed their time and/or resources toward this year's program. Recognizing those special people will not only make them feel appreciated but will encourage them to participate again next year. A personal letter of thanks from the steering committee chairperson is a nice way to recognize the contributions of your committee. A page in the local/state dental journal with a list of participants and sponsors would also be a nice way to thank those who graciously contributed their time and/or resources.

# Program Planning Timetable

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Getting the most mileage from your Give Kids A Smile® event takes planning and good organizational skills. This checklist will help you to effectively budget time and resources. **Be sure to visit the GKAS homepage frequently at [givekidsasmile.ada.org](http://givekidsasmile.ada.org) for the latest updates on the program!**

## September

\_\_\_\_\_ Designate a chairperson, possibly a dentist or dental office staffer with prior program planning experience.

\_\_\_\_\_ Appoint a steering committee. The most efficient working size for this type of committee is 5-9 persons.

## October

\_\_\_\_\_ **Starting October 3**, sign up your GKAS Day event on [givekidsasmile.ada.org](http://givekidsasmile.ada.org) and find out about products available from our sponsors, helpful information and more!

\_\_\_\_\_ Supplement supplies and materials by contacting various dental companies, local businesses, etc., for donations.

## November

\_\_\_\_\_ Establish subcommittees if necessary. Each planned activity should include a coordinator from the steering committee and an appropriate number of subcommittee members.

\_\_\_\_\_ Consider your options and select one or more activities suitable for your group.

\_\_\_\_\_ Decide whether you will pre-identify children for your event or whether it will be first come, first served.

\_\_\_\_\_ Review your financial resources and determine your budget. Solicit funding if applicable.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Request dental supplies online at [givekidsasmile.ada.org](http://givekidsasmile.ada.org). NOTE THE DEADLINE: November 11!** You can also download coloring and activity sheets by visiting the following link: [ADA.org/ncdhm](http://ADA.org/ncdhm).

\_\_\_\_\_ Communicate your activities to dentists in your area through your state and local dental publications and online resources. Encourage community support the GKAS event.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Remember: If you have not already done so, sign-up as a participant for Give Kids A Smile Day by going to the GKAS home page: [givekidsasmile.ada.org](http://givekidsasmile.ada.org).**

## December

\_\_\_\_\_ Finalize budget and timetables.

\_\_\_\_\_ Recruit volunteers from dental specialty groups, related dental organizations and community organizations.

\_\_\_\_\_ If you are pre-identifying children for your event, contact local organizations or schools for assistance in locating children from low-income families.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reserve any needed space, equipment or other materials.

\_\_\_\_\_ Finalize details for each activity and event.

\_\_\_\_\_ Schedule speaking engagements with community groups.

\_\_\_\_\_ Enlist support from elected officials by obtaining their commitment to attend your event, issuance of a proclamation acknowledging the event, or asking a prominent individual (such as the governor's spouse or other dignitary) to serve as honorary program chair.

\_\_\_\_\_ Secure any other vendors you may need for the event (food, caterer, sound system, balloons).

## January

\_\_\_\_\_ Decide on three key points that you want to make in media interviews or discussions with policymakers about how to improve dental access for children from low-income families in your area. Brief your media representative on topics about which he or she may be interviewed.

\_\_\_\_\_ Consider distributing posters on children's oral health and/or brochures in your area. To order FREE posters visit [ADA.org/ncdhm](http://ADA.org/ncdhm).

\_\_\_\_\_ Follow up with phone calls to invite media to cover your Give Kids A Smile event.

## February

\_\_\_\_\_ Conduct your Give Kids A Smile Event!

## March

\_\_\_\_\_ Acknowledge everyone who assisted with your promotion with a letter of thanks or certificate of appreciation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Review your event and related activities. Prepare a summary report of activities, expenses and other meaningful data including recommendations for next year.

\_\_\_\_\_ Report the actual program results by going to [givekidsasmile.ada.org](http://givekidsasmile.ada.org). Visit the **resources** at [givekidsasmile.ada.org](http://givekidsasmile.ada.org) for the *GKAS Data Collection Form*.