





# National Children's Dental Health Month Achieves Gold in Pennsylvania

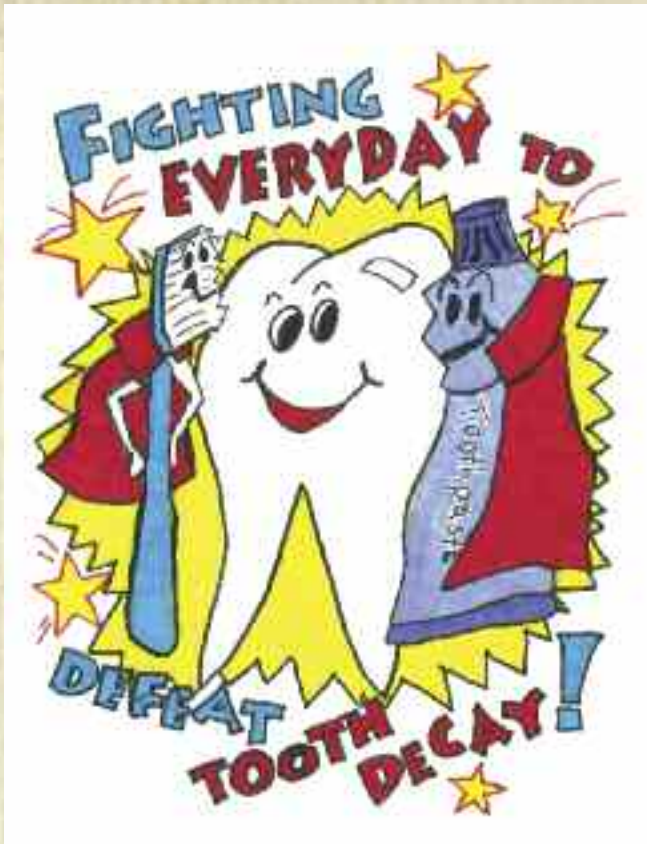
By Sara Mattrick, *Communications Coordinator*

Motivated and exuberant, the American Dental Association's (ADA) renowned set of twins Flossy and Buck McGrin and their counterparts Den and Gen Smiley, set out to achieve gold this year in promoting National Children's Dental Health Month (NCDHM). In classrooms throughout Pennsylvania, the twins celebrated their award winning oral health habits by encouraging students to join them in going the distance to strike gold—a gold medal smile that is.





PDA modified the program this year to focus more on online materials. By way of the PDA website, lesson plan kits were made readily and easily accessible to more than 3,000 schools. The kits contained a lesson plan featuring dental health discussion topics, fun classroom activities, interactive games and activity sheets. A complimentary "Get a Gold Medal Smile" poster was offered to each classroom featuring the ADA's winning team of twins.



Mason Gray, age 8 of Linglestown Elementary, Linglestown, was our 1st place winner.

## THIRD-GRADE POSTER CONTEST

The lesson plan kits also contained instructions for entering the PDA-sponsored, third-grade poster contest. PDA annually awards \$850 in monetary prizes to the students who design the top three posters. More than 200 well designed and creative posters were submitted to the PDA Central Office for judging.

Mason Gray, a third-grade student at Linglestown Elementary in Dauphin County was this year's first place winner. With a shiny, white tooth proudly positioned between a red-caped tooth brush and toothpaste, her superhero themed "Fighting Every Day to Defeat Tooth Decay" poster delivers a powerful message encouraging good oral health. Mason will be presented with her framed winning poster by a PDA member dentist, at an upcoming school awards assembly. Linglestown Elementary and Mason's teacher, Mrs. Sherri Fetterhuff also will receive \$250 each for participating in PDA's contest.

Second-place winner, Ellie Matson, a third-grade student of Kathryn D. Markley Elementary in Chester County, colorfully depicted her poster with the "5 Steps to a Winning Smile." Ellie numbered and illustrated the five steps—brush, floss, rinse, checkups and healthy foods—below a gold medal necklace displaying "#1" and a bright, white tooth on the medallion. Ellie will receive a \$250 prize.

"Shoot for 2: Brush for 2 Minutes 2 Times a Day" was the theme of third-place winner, Savannah Lorenc's poster. She drew a soccer player kicking a ball into a detailed soccer goal, uniquely equipped with tooth netting, toothbrush posts and a toothpaste crossbar. Savannah, a third-grader at Sheridan Terrace Elementary in Westmoreland County, will receive a \$100 prize.

The following students were among the Top 10 entries and will receive an Honorable Mention:

- Khryztelle Alferez, Age 9, Notre Dame Elementary, East Stroudsburg
- James Bartolucci, Age 8, Holy Family School, Nazareth
- Carley Fisher, Age 8, Resica Elementary, East Stroudsburg
- Christian Maccarrone, Age 9, JM Hill Elementary, East Stroudsburg
- Maison Smith, Age 9, Mountain View Elementary, Harrisburg
- Lucas Robbins, age 8, Elk Lake Elementary, Dimock
- Olivia Williams, Age 8, Canton Elementary, Canton

It is estimated that 20,000 third-grade students across Pennsylvania participated in this year's poster contest.

## NCDHM EVENTS

Our member dentists contribute to the success of NCDHM by promoting awareness through outreach to the children and parents who reside within our local communities. A wide variety of events and activities focused on educating children about the importance of oral health, are sponsored and held by district and local dental societies, dental offices, community organizations and elementary schools.

"I am proud of how NCDHM promotes dental health through humor and intellectual stimulation. As evidenced by the posters presented to us, these 8, 9 and 10-year-olds really do understand what the PDA and

dentistry is promoting," said Dr. Samer Mansour, statewide NCDHM chair. "NCDHM has and will continue to evolve, bringing a small but important element into the lives of impressionable third graders."

The following are just a few examples of the many ways that PDA member dentists contributed to the 2013 NCDHM program.

#### First District

- The students of the Art of Growing Nursery School in Holmes received toothbrushes and enjoyed an educational dental health film from Dr. Nancy Koshetar, who also educated the teachers with information to prepare their own oral health presentation for the children. To show their appreciation, the students sent Dr. Koshetar a handmade "Thank you!"

#### Second District

- "Healthy Children, Healthy Teeth," is Dr. Dilshad Sumar's slogan during the month of February. Throughout the month she paid special attention to her younger patients and explained to them during their visits how they can keep their teeth healthy. The NCDHM poster was displayed in her office and she distributed goodie bags to patients that each contained a toothbrush, toothpaste, stickers and coloring pages. To educate pediatricians more on the importance of oral health, she also made visits to family practices in the Sacred Heart Hospital in Allentown.
- Dr. Thomas Watson talked with more than 90 students in grades K-2 at Villa Maria Academy in Malvern on March 15. He shared an educational video, held a Q&A and handed out goodie bags containing activity sheets, a toothbrush and toothpaste.
- The Valley Forge Dental Association and the Montgomery Bucks Dental Society partnered with the Abington Police Athletic League to sponsor a free local teeth screening and sealant day for children on February 23. The event was hosted at the offices of Drs. Jay Freedman and Cary Limberakis, and for a second year approximately \$7,000 of free services were provided to the township's at-risk children.
- With more than 20 years of participation in promoting NCDHM, Dr. Joel Fromer handed out posters to patients he treated throughout the month of February and also delivered them to the local school nurses. The nurses displayed the posters in their schools in observance of the month. Dr. Fromer said, "The nurses always thank us for thinking of them during National Children's Dental Health Month. They really appreciated the posters."

#### Third District

- Dina Fisch and Regina M. Karoscik, hygienists for Dr. Nancy E. Willis, visited nine schools in Scranton to educate children about the importance of oral health. Topics discussed included brushing and flossing, the importance of fluoride, good snacks vs. bad snacks and visits to the dentist. Video clips were shared from "Casey Dental Interactive," "Buddy and Andy Brushing" and "Buddy and Andy's First Visit to the Dentist." After the videos, each child had the opportunity to practice what they learned by brushing the teeth of a few plush dental animal friends Fisch and Karoscik brought along.
- The Luzerne County Dental Society (LCDS) held its annual NCDHM event at the Wyoming Valley Mall in Wilkes-Barre. The free community event was held on February 16. The event featured dental screenings for children, games and a visit by the Tooth Fairy.

#### Fourth District

- Dr. Dwight Davis conducted screenings for approximately 70 seventh graders in Mount Carmel Area School District for NCDHM. Students were examined for signs of cavities and overall dental health.



*Ellie Matson, age 10  
of K.D. Markley Elementary, Malvern,  
was our 2nd place winner.*



*Savannah Lorenc, age 9  
of Sheridan Terrace Elementary, North  
Huntingdon, was our 3rd place winner.*





### **Fifth District**

- The Alliance of the Lancaster County Dental Society held its annual dental kit distribution on February 7. The dental kits, including toothbrushes, toothpaste and floss were sent to shelters throughout Lancaster County. In total, 1,800 kits were assembled and donated. The families of PDA member dentists were on hand to assemble the kits, in addition to Boy Scout Troops 93 and 99. The Alliance has distributed dental kits for 15 years.

### **Sixth District**

- Throughout the month, Dr. John Lazur displayed posters in his office advertising oral health awareness and encouraging the observation of NCDHM.

### **Eighth District**

- Dr. Jeremy Jewell visited schools during NCDHM educating children about the importance of dental health. He worked hands-on with students in classrooms between pre-kindergarten and third grade at Clarion Elementary, Immaculate Conception and Keystone Elementary Schools located in Clarion.

### **Ninth District**

- Posters were hung throughout NCDHM in the office of Dr. Carla Orlando as a reminder of the importance of practicing good oral hygiene for children.

### **Tenth District**

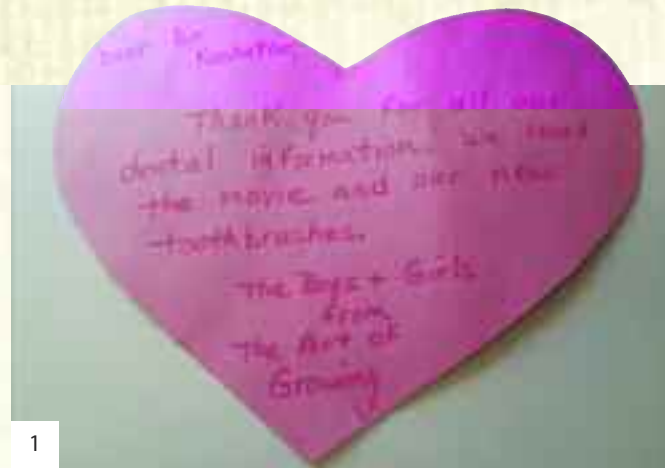
- "I look forward to working with the elementary schools to help educate children on good oral health," said Dr. Michael Korch of the visits he made during NCDHM elementary schools in Hampton Township School District, located in Allison Park. He was invited to speak to first-graders during an assembly in celebration of the month. He delivered a presentation, answered questions, demonstrated how to brush your teeth and shared an educational video. In addition, a table displaying X-rays and extracted teeth was set-up for students to explore. Students left the presentation with goodie bags filled with a toothbrush, timer, toothpaste, floss, pencils, bookmarks and posters.
- Dr. David Spokane visited about 40 local elementary schools to lecture the importance of oral hygiene. When visiting the schools, a gift was presented to the school nurses, thanking them for caring for the children. In addition to school visits, coloring contests were sent out to all area schools and distributed to office patients in grades K-5. Dr. Spokane advocates to the community the importance of observing NCDHM by supplying information and advertisements to his local newspapers.

### **Give Kids a Smile®**

In addition to National Children's Dental Health Month, many PDA members chose to donate their time to Give Kids a Smile® (GKAS), a national program run by the ADA to provide access to care for low-income families. Although GKAS is traditionally celebrated the first Friday in February, GKAS events occur throughout the year.

As part of their annual "Sealant Saturdays," Harrisburg Area Dental Society (HADS) worked with the Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) Hygiene Department to organize a free clinic day held on February 26 for local uninsured children. Comprehensive exams were performed and treatments were given by HACC hygiene students under the supervision of several HADS dentists.

Dr. Andrew Gould, a HADS member dentist said, "It was great to see so many smiling kids leaving the HACC Hygiene clinic with clean teeth!"



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1. A thoughtful hand-crafted thank you card was sent to Dr. Nancy Koshetar by the students of the Art of Growing.
2. Manor College EFDA students treating a patient at the office of Dr. Jay Freedman for a teeth screening and sealant day.
3. A group shot of the volunteers who helped in making the partnered NCDHM event of Valley Forge Dental Association, Montgomery Bucks Dental Society and Abington Police Athletic League a success.
4. A family who attended the teeth screening and sealant day with Dr. Jay Freedman and Lt. Pat Malloy, Abington Police Athletic League coordinator.
5. Dina Fisch and Regina M. Karoscik, hygienists for Dr. Nancy E. Willis, pose with students after an education presentation at the All Saints Academy in Scranton.
6. Students of Summit Christian Academy practice brushing on a two plush animal friends Dina Fisch and Regina M. Karoscik, hygienists for Dr. Nancy E. Willis, brought along to help students learn the importance of good oral health.
7. Presentation of \$1,000 donation from the Pennsylvania Dental Association Foundation to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, Student Chapter to support their GKAS "Sea our Smiles" outreach activities. From left to right: Aaron Schmick (Pitt Dental student), Dr. Donald Hoffman (Faculty member SDM and Pennsylvania Dental Association President) and Ashley Larson (Secretary, American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, Pitt Chapter).
8. Third year dental student Anthony Miller examines 10-year-old Reilly Vicznesky at the "Sea our Smiles" GKAS event.
9. Mark Shaw, a Pitt Dental student, and his patient give a thumbs up for the Healthy Smiles Program and Give Kids a Smile.
10. Pitt Dental student, Kara Achille smiling with one of her patients of the day during the Healthy Smile Program at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh.





St. Joseph's Dental Services Department and the Keystone Farmworker Health Outreach Program planned six free Saturday clinics to run once monthly from January through June. These scheduled clinics are part of their 14-year-old involvement in GKAS. Since their initial participation in the program, they have provided free dental care to more than 2,000 disadvantaged children in Berks County. St. Joseph residents, private-practice dentists, assistants and hygienists and students from the dental assistant program at Berks Technical Institute volunteer to provide services for children whose families don't have dental insurance or are underinsured.

The University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine held its 10th annual Give Kids a Smile Days on February 1 and March 22. The program this year was themed "Sea our Smiles," and provided free dental care for more than 100 children and adolescents living in the Pittsburgh area. Teams of faculty and students provided fluoride treatments, cleanings, radiographs, restorations, extractions and sealants. Children were engaged in interactive learning by visiting an on-site education station that contained learning modules on how proper diet and oral habits affect teeth as well as lessons on good oral hygiene. Informational packets, posters and visual aids geared specifically to their age group were distributed to patients. Over the last decade alone, the university has provided \$100,000 in free care to children in need.

The Dental Society of Western PA (DSWP) held its annual GKAS days from October 30 – November 3, at the Children's Museum in Pittsburgh. During these days, dental screenings were provided for 341 pre-school and Head Start children who visited from the Pittsburgh area as part of the Healthy Smiles Program hosted by and held at the museum. Children were treated to a visit by the Tooth Fairy and received a backpack full of "goodies" to take home. Parents received advice about their children's dental care along with handouts and information on local dental clinics, as needed. The event was spearheaded by DSWP members, Dr. MaryAnn Davis and Dr. Sharon Davis. Representatives from Henry Schein, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Aetna and dental students from the University of Pittsburgh lent a hand to the event. A special thank you was extended to Yvonne Atkinson of the Children's Museum for her help and organization, to Henry Schein for providing the chairs for screenings and Donna Byers for her many years of help.

#### ***Thank You for Volunteering***

PDA would like to thank its members who generously supported this year's NCDHM program. No matter how big or small, every contribution made a difference in the oral health of Pennsylvania's children. It is through your continued efforts that care has become increasingly accessible to those in need.

PDA would like to recognize Dr. Samer Mansour for his role as the NCDHM advisory group chair. Dr. Mansour's help was crucial to the program's success in its transitional formatting this year.

*11. Dr. David Spokane answered questions during one of his visits to local elementary schools.*

*12. Students were engaged in fun learning during an NCDHM presentation by Dr. David Spokane.*

*13. An aquatic decor theme of was carried through this year's 10th annual Give Kids a Smile Days, titled "Sea our Smiles," held by the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine.*

*14. Pitt Dental student, Aaron Schmick's patient lit the way for him to examine his teeth at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh*

