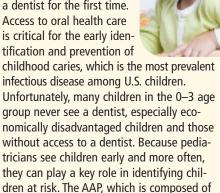
Pediatricians Join Access Team

The American Dental Association Foundation has joined forces with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to try to improve the oral health of children in a critical age group—newborn to age 3. The ADA Foundation has awarded the AAP with a \$300,000 grant to educate pediatricians on the importance of oral health care for young children.

The grant will provide pediatricians with training to assess the oral health of children, particularly newborns and toddlers, who can develop dental problems before they see a dentist for the first time. Access to oral health care is critical for the early identification and prevention of



60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric

medical subspecialists, and pediatric surgi-

cal specialists, has recognized the rise of

oral disease in young children, and oral

health is a key part of its strategic plan.

The ADA Foundation grant—which will provide up to \$100,000 annually for three years—will fund annual "train-the-trainer" oral health summits where pediatricians will learn how to conduct oral health risk assessments (including oral screening exams), teach families about oral health and prevention, and refer children to a "dental home."

"By arming pediatricians with the tools they need to assess oral health risk, we can begin to reduce the number of children who need but don't receive dental care and build a solid foundation for their oral health," says Renee Jenkins, MD, FAAP, president of the AAP.

Cape Cod Dentist Saves the Day

When Heather*, a pregnant 21-year-old Falmouth woman who was suffering from excruciating pain from an abscessed tooth, called the Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) on a Friday afternoon in mid-January looking for relief, she had nowhere else to turn. But MDS member dentist Michael P. Adams, DDS, and Cape Cod Dentists Care, an access program of the Cape Cod District Dental Society, came to the young woman's rescue. This is a shining example of the impact that MDS dentists providing access to oral care can have on someone's life.

It all started the afternoon of Friday, January 11, 2008, when Heather called MDS headquarters looking for help in relieving her of the tooth pain from which she was suffering. She had spent all day trying to obtain treatment on her own, calling MassHealth three times that day, but she didn't get any further than an automated voice recording. Heather contacted her obstetrician, who instructed her to go to the Falmouth Hospital emergency room, where ER doctors would most likely prescribe painkillers to relieve her discomfort. However, since Heather was pregnant, she couldn't take the medication. But with her last resort of phoning the MDS, Heather had made the right call.

The person who answered that call was MDS Communications Assistant Jessica Robinson, who routinely fields calls from the public regarding resources for free or reduced-fee care. One of these resources is Cape Cod Dentists Care (CCDC), a collaboration between the Cape Cod District Dental Society and the Community Coalition of Cape Cod. CCDC was launched in 2003 to connect uninsured low- to moderate-income Cape Cod residents with oral care.

Since Heather lives on the Cape, Jessica referred her to Miriam Erickson, CCDC program coordina-

*Name has been changed to protect patient's identity.



"It's pretty routine for me, emergency calls like this. It's something I'd do again," says Dr. Michael Adams.

tor, who jumped into action. "I thought, 'How will I ever find her treatment on a Friday afternoon?' " says Miriam. She referred Heather to the Ellen Jones Community Dental Service in Harwich, but as it was now almost 4 p.m. and it would be closing shortly and since Heather was nearly an hour's drive from there, that was not an option.

CCDC is not an emergency care program, but Miriam decided to give the program's one participating dentist in Falmouth, Dr. Adams, a call. "I was very concerned about Heather's pregnancy and the possibility of infection," she says. But Dr. Adams's office was closed at this late hour on a Friday afternoon, so she took a stab and called the emergency number on the recording. Miriam was very happy with what transpired: "Dr. Adams answered the phone, listened to the story of Heather's predicament, and said, 'Tell her to leave her house now and I will meet her at my office.' "

Upon diagnosing the abscess, Dr. Adams offered her the choice of either a root canal or an extraction. Heather chose extraction, even though she has had a dental phobia from a negative childhood experience. But this experience was anything but negative. Heather called Miriam after she left Dr. Adams's office and told her that Dr. Adams was wonderful and could not have been more caring. "She sounded like a different

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"My mom's teeth hurt.
Can she come next time?"

—9-year-old girl treated on MAC Van



QCA



In this issue, MDS ACCESS UPDATE features a Q&A with Sen. Harriette L. Chandler regarding her involvement in access to care in the Commonwealth. Sen. Chandler is currently serving her fourth term representing the 1st Worcester District in the Massachusetts State Senate.

- Q. As a member of the legislature, you have become increasingly involved in oral health matters. How did this come about?
- A. I first became involved with oral health matters as the chairwoman of the Health Care Committee in the House. As part of the Children's Health Insurance Program, I initiated a commission to study the status of children's oral health in Massachusetts. The commission reported that oral health care for children throughout the Commonwealth was lacking. It was then that I decided that something had to be done.
- Q. As the co-chair of the legislature's Oral Health Caucus, what are your goals for this group?
- A. This year, the goals of the Oral Health Caucus are to receive more funding for the state's Office of Oral Health within the

Department of Public Health. Also, we are hoping to seat a licensed dentist to act as director of the office. Additionally, we are seeking funds for the Bringing Early Education, Screening and Treatment (BEST) Oral Health Program in Hampden County. BEST is in the last year of a threeyear pilot program and has benefited many needy children. Finally, we have requested funding in the upcoming budget for a Tufts University program that provides oral health care to persons with disabilities, so that it may continue to provide this much-needed service.

- Q. Oral health issues seem to have gained visibility in the legislature recently, and more elected officials now have a better understanding of the issues. What do you think is the primary reason for this?
- A. I believe that these issues have gained greater visibility because of the outreach efforts of the Oral Health Caucus, the first of its kind in the United States. The other members of the Caucus and I try to reach out to our colleagues and inform them of the important issues related to oral health care.

- Q. The MDS, as well as other groups, is focused on providing solutions to the access-to-care crisis. What can state government do to help in these efforts?
- A. I think that one of the most important things that state government can do to help relieve the crisis is to increase reimbursements for dentists who treat patients on MassHealth. This may encourage more dentists to accept MassHealth patients. We also need legislation that will relieve the educational debt of dental school students who are willing to serve the oral health needs of un-served and underserved populations in the Commonwealth for a given period of time.
- Q. To date, what has been your proudest legislative accomplishment related to oral health?
- A. I am most proud that we were able to reinstate dental coverage for adult MassHealth patients. This means that people who haven't received proper oral health care can finally be seen by a dentist. This is extremely important, especially since lack of proper oral health care may lead to other, more serious health problems.

Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van Update

March 2008 was a momentous month for the MDS Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van Program as it reached \$400,000 worth of free oral care services for the program.

Since its inception in February 2007, more than 1,600 children have been treated on the MAC Van. This can be attributed to the generosity of donated professional time from more than 160 volunteers, including dentists, dental assistants, and dental hygienists.

During the months of February and March, the MAC Van traveled to the following locations:

- Keith Middle School, New Bedford
- L.M. Jacobs Elementary School, Hull
- Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence
- Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School
- Clara Macy School, Bellingham
- Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School, Franklin

- Pittsfield Head Start
- Orange Elementary School
- Henry Lord Middle School
- Orleans Council on Aging

If you are interested in volunteering on the MAC Van, please contact Ellen Factor, MAC Van program manager, at (800) 342-8747, ext. 228, or email *efactor@massdental.org*.

MAC Van Service Schedule*

Week June 2, 2008	Location Middlesex District/TBA
June 9, 2008	North Metropolitan District/TBA
June 16, 2008	Berkshire District/Morningside Community School, Pittsfield
June 23, 2008	North Shore District/Pettengill House and Salisbury Boys & Girls Club
July 14, 2008	East Middlesex District/TBA
July 21, 2008	South Shore District/Old Colony YMCA, Brockton
July 28, 2008	Wachusett District/Boys & Girls Club of North Central MA
August 4, 2008	Southeastern District/Camp Welch, Fall River, and New Bedford YMCA Camp
August 11, 2008	Cape Cod District/TBA

*Subject to change. Visit www.mdsfoundation.org/macvan for schedule updates.

Taking a Bite Out of the Access Problem in the Gateway Region

Students at the Gateway Regional School District in western Massachusetts won't have to go very far to get the oral care they need, thanks to a new program that was launched in April by the Hilltown Community Health Centers (HCHC). The Gator Grins Dental Outreach Program aims to provide a "dental home" for Gateway Regional School District students, making it more convenient for kids (and parents) in this rural area to have easy access to full dental care without missing class (or work). The Gator Grins Program began seeing second-grade students at the Littleville Elementary School in Huntington on April 7. Of the six second graders treated that day, two had never been to the dentist. The program will expand next year to include other students from the Gateway Regional School District.

"Our goal is to provide easier access to full dental treatment for Hilltown children whose parents are often unable to get them this care due to work conflicts, desire not to miss school, lack of transportation, insurance and financial problems, and/or lack of oral health knowledge," says HCHC Dental Director Mary Lou Stuart, DDS.

Under the direction of Dr. Stuart, services will be provided by Emily Bowden, DMD, and Liz Spooner, RDH, right on school premises. All treatment—which includes basic and restorative, thereby eliminating the need for students to be referred elsewhere for restorative care—will be performed at the school using portable state-of-the-art dental equipment. Services provided include comprehensive exams, X-rays, cleanings, fluoride varnishes, sealants, fillings, and emergency care. Additionally, services are available after school hours and during the summer at the HCHC's Huntington and Worthington health center locations.

The idea for the Gator Grins program came about because HCHC already has a successful working model in its school-based health center at the Gateway Regional Middle and High School. The health center is open during school hours, and students have access to health care including immunizations, physical exams, emergency care, and mental health counseling. A dental program seemed a natural extension, since "there is evidence of a strong need for dental care for kids in the area," says Mary Jo Maffei, HCHC's dental outreach project manager.

To participate, parents must submit a completed permission form and medical history, which is sent home with students or is available upon request. The student is then given an appointment for a comprehensive exam and X-rays on a day when the Gator Grins dental team is scheduled at



Nathan Haskell, age 14, of Worthington, helps Dr. Emily Bowden, Gator Grins dentist (left), and Kiirsten Cooper, Gator Grins coordinator, test the portable dental equipment in preparation for the Gator Grins program launch.

the child's school. Parents are welcome to attend the appointments, and information on any needed follow-up treatment is relayed to parents and will only be provided after receiving parental consent.

The Gator Grins Dental Outreach Program is funded by the Oral Health Foundation and does not use any funds from the Gateway Regional School District. The goal of the program is to become self-sustaining within three years.

For more information on the Gator Grins Dental Outreach Program, please visit **www.hchcweb.org** or contact Mary Jo Maffei at **(413) 238-4117**.

MDS Members Give Children of the Need a Reason to Smile



Give Kids a Smile program.

This year, the MDS partnered with Head Start programs throughout the state to provide free dental exams and any necessary follow-up treatment for children participating in Head Start. Members also volunteered to provide local first-grade students with classroom presentations on the importance of taking care of their oral health. All MDS Give Kids a Smile events are taking place from February through June.

American Dental Association's annual

The ADA's Give Kids A Smile Day was held on February 1 and featured more than 51,000 dental professionals offering free dental services to an estimated 500,000 underserved children

at more than 2,000 sites nationwide. The purpose of *Give Kids a Smile* is to help disadvantaged children access dental services and to highlight for lawmakers and policymakers the ongoing challenges that low-income children face in accessing even basic dental care. A recent study released by the Catalyst Institute found that children from low-income families were more likely to suffer from tooth and gum problems.

"I think it's wonderful that our members are working together to fight oral diseases that disproportionately affect disadvantaged children," says Andrea Richman, DMD, president of the MDS.

For more information on *Give Kids a Smile*, contact the Massachusetts Dental Society at (800) 342-8747 or visit *www.massdental.org*.

Cape Cod Dentist Saves the Day

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person when she called, in high spirits and out of pain," says Miriam.

In the five years since its inception, 75 members—18 of whom are specialists—of the Cape Cod District Dental Society have participated in the CCDC program, providing more than \$333,000 worth of services to Cape Cod residents in need of oral care.

"We all know that there is an access-to-care problem, not only in Massachusetts, but throughout our country," says MDS Trustee and Cape Cod endodontist Anthony T. Borgia, DDS, who serves as the CCDC's clinical advisor. "CCDC and Dr. Adams exemplify the progress that can be made in resolving this dilemma through the collaboration of organized dentistry, community outreach groups, and private practitioners. The MDS can be proud that it sponsors a model program such as CCDC that is an example of how health care can best be delivered in our country."

And as for the dentist who came to the aid of a young woman who was not his patient? "A lot of dentists would do that, too," says Dr. Adams, non-chalantly. "It's pretty routine for me, emergency calls like this. I came in. It's something I'd do again."



Spotlight on Volunteers

The following MDS member dentists and staff generously donated their services and time to help make a difference in children's lives on the MAC Van during January, February, and March 2008.

Dentists

Dr. Jamil Abbasy

Dr. Alice Chen

Dr. Benjamin Chung

Dr. James Cinamon

Dr. Jefferson Dexter

Dr. Linda Drennen Dr. Melvin Ehrlich

Dr. Linda Fortenberry

Dr. Lisa Gamache

Dr. Joseph Giordano

Dr. Jeffrey Glavin

Dr. L. Michael Gouveia

Dr. David Hirshfield

Dr. Suzanne Keller

Dr. Amjad Kinjawi

Dr. Herbert Kinney Dr. Douglas Leigh

Dr. Stuart Liss

Dr. Stephen Locke

Dr. Richard LoGuercio

Dr. Charles McQuade

Dr. Frederick Mesloh Dr. Daniel Molloy

Dr. John O'Horo

Dr. Eugene Petti

Dr. Barbara Preussner

Dr. Paul Raymond

Dr. Philip Robitaille

Dr. David Schmid

Dr. Jay Schwab

Dr. Jeffry Shaefer

Dr. Chi-Yun Sham

Dr. Janice Spada

Dr. Jared Stubbs

Dr. Mary Terkoski

Dr. Tina Wang Dr. Richard Weiler Jr.

Dr. Jessica White

Dr. Richard Zuppardi

Dr. Kichard Zuppardi

Dental Hygienists

Judy Dorner Diane Henrikson Monica Iaria Barbara Wilson

Audra Lacey

Tiffany Sum

Dental Assistants

Kara Alibrandi Kelly Bergen Jessica Bessette Sandra Binney Cheryl Charves Lindsey Dellaghelfa April DiLorenzo Diane Elz Mari Frohn

Diane Leal Laila Mendes Lorraine Moore Jill Murphy Marta Pacheco Rachel Pignone Cindy Provencher Monique Quinn Lisa Stukas

Erina Guidi Jo Anne Wolstencroft

Dental Assisting Students

Lisa Boggiatto Linda Borges

Doreen Furphy

Josie Garcia

Charlene Hamilton Kristy Ward

MAC Van Turns One

On February 5, 2008, the Massachusetts Dental Society Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van celebrated its first year of service, and because of the MAC Van and the generosity of MDS member dentists, many underprivileged children across the state now have healthier mouths.

In its first year of operation, the mobile unit treated 1,400 children, provided \$315,000 worth of free care, and traveled to 55 different locations throughout the state. More than 130 dental professionals—dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants—volunteered their time on the Van, and it is estimated that these volunteers donated more than \$83,000 worth of professional time.

"After only one full year of service, the MAC Van has been an unqualified success," says Andrea Richman, DMD, president of the MDS. "Not only have we provided numerous low-income children with free care, but we have also taught them how to take care of their teeth. The volunteer dentists and their staffs are to be applauded for their devotion to this critical service."

The MDS Foundation acquired the Van in late 2006 through a \$250,000 grant from Procter & Gamble. The mobile dental unit has been traveling to communities throughout Massachusetts, providing free dental screenings and treatment to low-income children. The MAC Van's staff includes a full-time dental assistant, and MDS volunteer dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants.

In addition to providing dental services, the purpose of the MAC Van is to give income-eligible children a "dental home," something many underserved children in the state are lacking. This will be facilitated through **MassDentists CARE** (Combining Access with Reduced Expense), the MDS's access program,



Dr. Richard LoGuercio, chair of the MDS Foundation, speaks at the MAC Van's one-year anniversary celebration held at Yankee Dental Congress 33 in Boston.

which provides reduced-cost care to qualified children who do not have MassHealth or private insurance.

"I am extremely proud of the members of the MDS who have donated their time and talents to treat all of the children who have been seen," says Richard LoGuercio, DDS, chair of the MDS Foundation. "Without their commitment, the MAC Van Program would not have a past or a future. The need for the Van is still great, and I hope that we can continue to be the impetus in providing critical oral care to children who may not be able to obtain it anywhere else."

The MAC Van partners with organizations that serve children from low-income families, including Boys & Girls Clubs, Head Start locations, YMCAs, and selected schools. Through individual and corporate donations, the MAC Van has received \$610,000 in funding to date.

For more information on the MAC Van, contact Ellen Factor, MDS manager of district member services, at **(800) 342-8747**, **ext. 228**, or visit **www.mdsfoundation.org**.

Massachusetts Dental Society

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