Give Yourself a Smile!
when you register online at:
regonline.com/gkas-mn

With each of the following options, you can decide how and when you volunteer. Registration takes only a few minutes and you can update your information as your plans evolve.

- Host an event at your own clinic
- Volunteer as an individual or team at another location
- Take referrals for specific cases after “Give Kids a Smile” (this is called Smile Factory)
- Make a financial contribution to the MDF

Learn more at mndental.org

Do you know someone who could benefit from “Give Kids a Smile”? Be the hero your child considers you — give them the smile they need. As a volunteer, you will build relationships, see smiles, and change lives.

MDA President Mike Perpich (left) is an annual volunteer at the Minneapolis District Dental Society’s “Give Kids a Smile” program at Sharing and Caring Hands Dental Clinic in Minneapolis.

Register today!

Give Kids a Smile
Friday, Feb. 7, and Saturday, Feb. 8
Register now to participate in this annual charitable program. You have the option of hosting an event in your own clinic or helping out at another location. Learn more at mndental.org.

Give Kids a Smile is a charitable outreach event coordinated each year by the Minnesota Dental Association.

Coordinated charity care – so exhausting and gratifying – has become something we do well here in Minnesota.

It helps kids. It gives back. And it builds public awareness about the need to do more to break down the barriers to dental care faced by Minnesota’s most vulnerable -- children.

If you have been involved with these statewide events, your motivation for volunteering is probably as simple as “because kids need it.” For a variety of reasons, all out of the kids’ control, they need help – some just need a good cleaning; others need extensive treatment.

As the MDA plans for “Give Kids a Smile 2014,” we know the children’s stories and faces may be new, but the need for care will be as great as ever. In fact, in the past 10 years, the number of kids living in poverty has risen 62 percent. And the number of kids living in extreme poverty has more than doubled to 81,000 kids.

Thanks to the hundreds of dentists who join in MDA’s coordinated charitable works each year.

In the land of the sturdy Paul Bunyan and above-average Lake Wobegone, it’s easy to imagine that all the state’s children are hale and hearty. During the first “Give Kids a Smile” event 12 years ago, however, we saw something much different.

We saw a sweet 4-year-old girl with rampant baby bottle decay. We saw a teenage boy whose only option was to be fitted with dentures. We saw teen sisters whose single parent, a mentally ill father, didn’t keep up with their medical appointments, so they were eager to see the dentist. And on and on.

These kids and their stories touched the hearts of dentists and entire teams in dental clinics in rural and urban areas.

Before “Give Kids a Smile,” charity dentistry was primarily done privately in one’s own office, at a community-based clinic or as part of out-of-country missions. But now, in addition to those important activities, more than 500 dentists – and 3,000 dental professionals in total – unite to provide treatment to 6,000 children each year as part of a statewide program.

One especially gratifying result of this program is that dental students, both future dentists and allied professionals, have been so entrenched in their schools’ “Give Kids a Smile” events, that they have created a workforce of active, young volunteers.

The spirit of coordinated charity care grew again with the Minnesota Mission of Mercy program, which has cared for another 532 children in the past two years.

The Minnesota Dental Association (MDA), Minnesota’s only state dental association, serves as the voice for dentistry in Minnesota, promoting the health of the public by ensuring the health and well-being of Minnesota’s dentists and dental community.

In June 2013, the Minnesota Dental Association will partner with the American Dental Association (ADA) and other dental organizations across the country to promote oral health and highlight the role of dentists in addressing the nation’s oral health problems.

The ADA's Get in the Game: The Battle for Better Oral Health campaign is designed to encourage all Americans to take personal responsibility for maintaining their own oral health — and to increase the public’s awareness of the role dentists play in promoting good health.

As Minnesota’s only state association representing the full spectrum of dentistry, the MDA is committed to helping Minnesota’s dentists achieve a better future for oral health.

Learn more at mndental.org

For each “Give Kids a Smile” event, MDA members generously volunteer their time and expertise to ensure children receive the care they need, often for the first time. MDA members say it is one of the most rewarding experiences of their careers.

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mndental.org
Early volunteer numbers are strong

Thanks to the following dentists, who registered so quickly as volunteers for “Give Kids a Smile,” as of Oct. 25! Hundreds more will join the list before Feb. 7:


The following community-based clinics will host events:

- Lake Superior College Dental Hygiene Clinic, Duluth; Central Lakes College, Brainerd; Dakota County Technical College, Rosemount; Good Samaritan Dental Clinic, Rochester; Minnesota State University, Mankato; Normandale Community College, Bloomington; Rice Regional Dental Clinic, Willmar; Union Gospel Mission, St. Paul; University of Minnesota - School of Dentistry, Minneapolis; and St. Joseph’s Community Dental Clinic, Park Rapids.

“The GKAS experience was extremely rewarding! It is great to know that Rice Regional Dental Clinic, volunteers and community donors made a measurable difference in the lives of many children. Through hands-on dental education to parents and children, as well as possible prevention of future dental disease through sealant placement and fluoride application, lives have been changed. Children will not have to experience dental pain in school or at home. Suspect caries were identified and the parents were sent home with educational material provided by Minnesota Dental Association about the caries process, the need for fluoride, and the effects that sweet and acidic foods have on teeth. Seeing the joy that the parents have when their children can access dental care cannot be replaced. It was worth all the time spent with phone calls and the advertising work that went into this event. Our volunteers said, ‘Sign me up again, I’m coming back to help next year!’”

- Renee Johnson, event coordinator at Rice Regional Dental Clinic in Willmar, where 72 children received care during last February’s “Give Kids a Smile.”

Likewise, “Give Kids a Smile” events at each participating clinic are more successful when they work with community partnerships. Start making some phone calls now to local schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, county public nurses and others. Explain “Give Kids a Smile” and how your clinic is participating. Ask if they can help you identify a specific number of kids who could benefit from your services.

Many clinics find that these partnerships not only create lasting relationships, but they also ensure fewer failed appointments. Please find the section called “Working with local agencies to identify children in need” in the online Participation Kit for resources to help you find local organizations.