Seton Center Family and Health Services

Sidelights

April 2008

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Count to Three... and Smile!!

Thanks to the generous support from *three* Foundations, Seton Dental is able to continue its mission of improving the oral health of low-income children in the Kansas City area.

Funding last year from the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City (HCF) allowed Seton to begin its pilot program, "Adopt-a-School" where students in four elementary schools in disadvantaged neighborhoods were provided total dental care at no cost to their families. When the students began the program, their dental health was deplorable; most had never seen a dentist, some had never owned a toothbrush, and many had 10-12 cavities requiring immediate attention. At the end of the school year, more than 80% of the children were decay-free and had received their second fluoride varnish treatment to prevent further decay. Funding this year from the Health Care Foundation has allowed us to "adopt" two additional schools positively impacting the oral health of more than 500 low-income children in our community.

Buoyed by the success of the dental program for older children, Seton Dental initiated a new project, "Wee Smile" for three to five year- old youngsters in four early learning sites in low-income neighborhoods. This project is made possible through funding from the WHO Foundation (Women Helping Others) and by the State Street Foundation and its goal is to identify children with dental problems and intervene before dental disease becomes acute. All children will receive entertaining and interactive lessons on proper brushing and flossing techniques, oral screenings, dental work when needed, and fluoride varnish treatments as a preventive measure; again, at no cost to the families. Using our portable dental delivery system (HCF- funded), screenings, cleanings and fluoride varnish treatments are delivered on-site at each early learning center in the "comfort zone" of the young child. Those children needing extensive dental work will be brought to Seton Dental where nitrous oxide can be used to eliminate pain and anxiety.

"Seton Center is grateful to all three Foundations for their support of our dental program," states Brenda Lasater, Director of Dental Services. "The inclusion of two more schools in "Adopt-a-School" and the four early learning sites in "Wee Smile" will enable us to move forward in our efforts to eradicate oral decay in low-income children."

Dr. Kay Kong with students in "Adopt-a-School" program

Dr. Kong and young patient enjoy the new dental chair provided by Health Care Foundation funding.

Patient from the "Wee Smile" project joins others in a Dental Health Month celebration in Seton Dental.

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1st Quarter 2008

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We regret any omission of names received too late for publication.

To friends of Seton,

Thanks to each of you, Seton Center was able to provide 544 families with food baskets and gifts in our annual Christmas Sharing Program. Your generosity made it possible for 1,200 people, including 585 children, to share in the joys of the Season. Your warmth was also felt (quite literally) by area residents with your generous donations of gloves, mittens, scarves, hats, coats and afghans .

Celebrate Heritage

February was Black History Month and Seton Alternative High School hosted various events to celebrate African American heritage. Guest speakers for the month included: Mark Porter from 100 Black Men of Blue Hills who led male students in discussions of the rites of passage for black youth and how to become productive men in today's society; while Gigi Owens, long-time community activist, met with our female students to discuss the roles and responsibilities of women. The highlight of the month-long celebration was a Heritage Feast of ethnic dishes prepared for students, parents and staff. Ron McMillan, community activist, and Mark Porter were guest speakers for the event.

From the Black Arts Movement to the Black National Movement, students in Mrs. Peterson's class immersed themselves in a month-long study of African American Humanities concentrating specifically in three areas: Literature, History and Music. In one particular project, students interviewed family or community members who were in high school or college in the 1960s and 1970s; years which spanned the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War era.

"The idea of this unit," said Mrs. Peterson, "was to find changes and similarities in generational beliefs and values, and to determine whether these changes or similarities originated in families, in the culture, or a combination of both."

Students display some of their new textbooks and library materials provided by funding from the McGee Foundation.

In recognition of the upcoming national elections, Mark Girth from the Election Board of Kansas City, Missouri spoke to students and registered students age 18 or older with emphasis placed on the importance of one vote.

"The right to vote is the cornerstone of our democracy," states Principal Warren. "Teaching students the importance of exercising this right is in keeping with our high school's goal of producing lifelong learners, critical thinkers and productive citizens."

"Lighting pathways to healthier lives." Seton Center is a Catholic sponsored human service agency in Greater Kansas City which helps people break cycles of poverty. Seton Center provides health, social and educational programs to address current community needs and tools to support people in transforming their lives.

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