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SNDS MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Access to dental services is one of the most pressing health care needs for children whose families cannot afford regular trips to the dentist. Tooth decay is the single most common chronic childhood disease. Nearly one in four children under five already has cavities and 10 million children ages two through 18 had no dental insurance in 2011. Regular dental check-ups are critical to keep children's teeth and gums healthy.

To make a dent in this urgent need and to shine a spotlight on this critical problem, The Southern Nevada Dental Society sponsored its 15th annual Give Kids A Smile® event on February 4th at UNLV School of Dental Medicine. At the event, an estimated 150 **pre-selected** children were invited to receive free dental services consisting of dental examinations, x-rays, a dental cleaning, dental treatment and oral hygiene instruction.

It is shocking that dental decay remains the most common chronic childhood disease. Children from low-income families suffer twice as much from dental decay as those from more affluent families. There are thousands of kids in this state and across the country who can't eat or sleep properly, can't pay attention in school and can't smile because they suffer from untreated dental disease. Without relief, these children could face lifelong health problems – not just dental health, but overall health. As a 2011 CDC Oral Health report says, "For children, untreated cavities can cause pain, dysfunction, school absences, difficulty concentrating, and poor appearance—problems that greatly affect a child's quality of life and ability to succeed."

Unfortunately, no single-day volunteer program will provide a solid, maintainable system of dental care delivery. That is why the Southern Nevada Dental Society and Nevada Dental Association has joined with the American Dental Association (ADA) in Action for Dental Health, a nationwide, community-based movement to address the diverse set of barriers that holds people back from achieving good oral health. Give Kids A Smile is just one of several initiatives under Action for Dental Health aimed at reducing the barriers that children and adults face to obtain dental care.
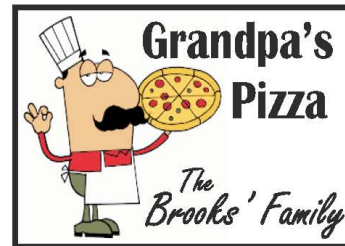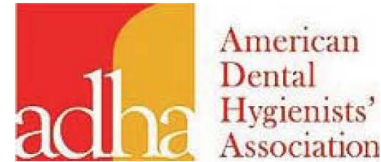
Thank you to our amazing volunteers and sponsors that made this day possible. If you are interested in volunteering or sponsoring our 2018 event, please contact the Southern Nevada Dental Society at (702) 733-8700.

Thank you to our 2018 sponsors, we couldn't make it happen without you!

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**If you are interested in sponsoring this event please contact
Jessica Beason @ the SNDS Office (702) 733-8700 or
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