



# Dental Public Health Activity Descriptive Summary

---

**Practice Number:** 05001  
**Submitted By:** Arkansas Department of Health, Office of Oral Health  
**Submission Date:** August 2001  
**Last Updated:** July 2011

## **The Dental Health Action Team and the Future Smiles Dental Clinic**

The Little Rock School District encompasses a large metropolitan area of central Arkansas. While the county has the largest concentration of dentists in the state, sub-populations within the county have limited access to dental care. The Dental Health Action Team (DHAT) came together to assess the level of oral health in the community and to provide access to dental care for eligible children. With the collaboration of the twelve partner organizations, the DHAT worked with school administrators and staff, teachers, students, and parents to establish a format for dental screenings and to refer needy students to dental providers. During the spring of 2011, the DHAT screened 1,000 Head Start children and 2,500 school age children and referred the children to local dentists for needed treatment. Following on the success of the annual screenings and the subsequent dental sealant projects conducted in the target schools, the DHAT secured cooperation of the school district and funding to establish a dental clinic in the rebuilt Wakefield Elementary School in SW Little Rock. The state-of-the-art three-chair clinic, Future Smiles, provides comprehensive dental care for children in 6 elementary schools and one middle school in the area.

### **Lessons Learned:**

The greatest challenge for the Future Smiles clinic, at start up and continuation, has been finding a dentist to work in the clinic. Only through the cooperation of Arkansas Children's Hospital (ACH) has the clinic remained fully-staffed throughout its existence. A pediatric dentist employed by ACH is assigned to Future Smiles 3-4 days per week. Funding has been a challenge. Medicaid reimburses for covered students, but a series of small grants from Blue and You, Delta Dental and small foundations have been necessary to ensure sustainability.

The unparalleled cooperation of the Little Rock School District, and the administration and staff of Wakefield Elementary School have been invaluable in keeping the clinic at full capacity, now treating children from a wide area of Southwest Little Rock.

---

### **Contact Person(s) for Inquiries:**

Lynn Douglas Mouden, DDS, MPH, Director, Office of Oral Health, Arkansas Department of Health, 4815 W. Markham Street, Slot 18, Little Rock, AR 72205, Phone: 501-661-2595, Fax: 501-661-2240, Email: [lynn.mouden@arkansas.gov](mailto:lynn.mouden@arkansas.gov)

Jolene Perkins, Clinic Manager, Future Smiles Dental Clinic, Wakefield Elementary School, 75 Westminister Drive, Little Rock, AR 72209, Phone: 501-447-6645, Email: [jkperkins@ualr.edu](mailto:jkperkins@ualr.edu)