

**Suwannee Valley Community Coordinated Child Care, Inc (SV4Cs)
Oral Health Initiative Proposal**

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Suwannee Valley 4 Cs (SV4Cs) is in a unique position to have direct contact with children in our rural north central region. We have already provided direct services to 435 families and 17 pregnant women throughout the 2004-2005 school year.

The federal funding requested for this project is \$44,056. This funding will provide the following services in the SV4Cs service area which includes Hamilton, Suwannee, Lafayette and Columbia Counties.

The initiative will serve the HS/EHS/Pregnant Mom programs and the SV4Cs service area. We are funded to serve 100 families and 12 pregnant moms in the Early Head Start program and 318 families in the Head Start program. We will offer oral health educational trainings to the community and provide oral health education packets to local providers to distribute to their patients/clients.

This project is a new initiative designed to develop a network of local dental providers to increase dental care access. It will expand on the HS/EHS oral health component by providing developmentally appropriate oral health education to all enrolled children, parents, pregnant women, staff, and in the community. This initiative will reduce the number of occurrences of tooth decay among our enrolled children, families, and pregnant women.

Implementation of Project

Once the planning is accomplished SV4Cs will then begin to advertise in the monthly family focus flyers, discuss services in monthly parent and pregnant mom meetings, and provide a helpline for families to call and ask questions pertaining to oral health and/or what service are provided. The Oral Health Outreach Project Coordinator will implement the Head Start oral health training project to each HS/EHS classroom throughout the year as evidence-based by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This project will promote meaningful learning experiences using a developmentally appropriate mascot or puppet, in the following areas: Visiting the dentist; awareness of the mouth, important functions of the mouth, importance of keeping teeth clean; tooth brushing; wise food choices; keeping teeth safe and a fun activity at the end of each lesson. The Oral Health Outreach Project Coordinator will also implement oral health trainings at parent and pregnant mom meetings and offer two oral health trainings a year to the community as evidence based by the American Academy of Periodontology and the Texas Department of State Health Services

The oral health outreach project staff will begin facilitating dental exams for all HS/EHS and will be completed in October of 2005. An oral health risk assessment will be developed and distributed to all enrolled pregnant women by October 2005. Project staff will then begin to facilitate all follow-up care for children who failed their dental exam and pregnant women who had oral health risk, to new local providers in the month of October 2005. All referrals will be completed and documented in the ChildPlus tracking system by the end of the school year.

The Health Services Manager will develop a Post-Participation Survey and a Community Provider Survey that will begin to be distributed by February 2005 to all providers and families that participated in the project. After receiving surveys, the data

will then be reviewed and all changes will be made by the beginning of the second grant year.

We believe that by making all project information and resources of the Oral Health Outreach Project available to other program and the community we will be providing cooperative assistance to other programs and disseminating lessons learned. The Health Services Manager will make all project information available on the SV4Cs website so that anyone can access the information. Items that will be posted are: all surveys, results of the surveys, changes made within the project and an email address and phone number to contact project staff with question about the project. We will also continue to attend any Head Start Oral Health Forums and meetings.

Desired Outcomes

Refer to Results and Benefits

Results or Benefits Expected

Suwannee Valley 4Cs expects that the proposed Oral Health Outreach Project will yield benefits to children, families, pregnant women and the community as a whole, including but not limited to the expected results or benefits listed below.

Benefits to children

- Children who participate in the Oral Health Outreach Project will receive high-quality, consistent dental care from local providers.
- Children will develop long-term relationships with qualified dental providers committed to the care of the individual child.
- By utilizing local providers, children will experience less travel and waiting times which will lead to less missed appointments.

- Children’s daily dental hygiene routine will become healthier due to training and support received by their parents from the staff of the Oral Health Outreach Project.
- With healthier daily dental routines, children will experience less dental issues in the future.
- The dental development of children will be addressed at the earliest stages, by providing timely intervention or prevention of potential dental problems. By doing so, children will experience less pain which will lead to improved nutrition, behavior and overall educational outcomes.
- Children will receive transportation assistance when necessary to access dental care.
- The Oral Health Outreach Project will provide enrolled children with an oral health presentation that will demonstrate the importance of oral hygiene and encourage them with fun activities that will strengthen daily dental care.

Benefits to families (including Pregnant Women)

- Parents will gain security from having a long-term, established relationship with their child’s dental provider.
- Parents will gain the knowledge to advocate and negotiate dental care for their child and to make full use of existing social services and family support resources from the Oral Health Outreach Project.
- Families will have access to qualified, understanding staff who will share information about their children’s dental health.
- Families will receive support and training in accessing a source of ongoing dental care for their children and themselves.

- Pregnant women will receive support and training in accessing dental care, including oral health education.
- Parents and pregnant women will have an opportunity to identify and support goals for their children, their families and themselves through support and training that takes into account their age, culture and unique needs and characteristics.
- Families and pregnant women will receive transportation assistance when necessary to access oral health activities, dental care and social services.

Benefits to Staff

- Staff will experience less behavior problems from children with dental decay.
- Staff will experience increased educational outcomes.

Benefits to the Community

- Incidences of dental decay will decline due to the provision of preventative and ongoing care to children and their families and pregnant women.
- Parents and pregnant women who participated in the Oral Health Outreach Project will be empowered to become active, responsible citizens and advocates for their community.
- The community will experience a reduction in the rate of premature births due to dental infections.
- Provision of dental services by all community agencies and programs will be facilitated through transportation support provided by the Oral Health Outreach Project.