



Pediatric Dental Initiative

Great smiles. Great futures.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Louis Ponick

PDI Continues Providing Kids with Treatment Until Surgery Center Opens

On October 19th, 2006, PDI left at 4:30 a.m. from Santa Rosa with three Sonoma County families, again destined for the Central Valley Dental Surgicenter located in Atwater (near Modesto). During what ended up being a seven-hour round trip drive, PDI successfully coordinated the dental surgery services for its seventh, eighth, and ninth child patients: four year-olds Jacqueline and Alexis, and three year-old Shakira. PDI provides transportation and lunch to families free of charge during these trips.

In fact, PDI has made arrangements for 16 kids to be treated, but due to seven “no-shows,” nine children have been treated so far. PDI case managers feel optimistic that they can successfully schedule nine more surgeries in November alone. In addition, PDI refers parents who are able to drive to Atwater to make their trips independently of PDI.

During the long drive, children were able to play with educational items provided in a PDI “goodie bucket,” while parents completed paperwork for the surgery center. While the children underwent their surgeries, PDI staff spoke with their parents about the best methods for cleaning their child’s teeth and choosing “tooth-friendly” foods.

Although each child had extensive work done, the surgeries lasted no more than 45 minutes each. Shakira had two teeth removed and four cavities filled; Alexis had six teeth extracted and one cavity filled; and Jacqueline had eight teeth capped and two teeth removed – one of which was a previously-capped tooth that had become infected. In a follow up phone call with Shakira’s mother, she commented to PDI case manager Sandra Echavarria that “it was really special.”



About PDI. PDI is a non-profit, community-based organization founded by a group of child health advocates to address the unmet oral health needs of children from low-income backgrounds who need anesthesia for dental treatment. PDI’s mission is to open a dental surgery center dedicated to serving the oral surgery needs of children in Northern California, regardless of a patients’ insurance status or ability to pay. Through dental education and outreach efforts, working with parents and health care providers, PDI hopes to eliminate the pain, suffering and distractions that living with Baby Bottle tooth decay causes. Treatment and education helps build the confidence children need to excel in school and on the playground. For more information about PDI, please visit: www.pedidental.org.

About Baby Bottle Tooth Decay. Baby Bottle Tooth Decay (Early Childhood Caries – ECC) is a major health issue in America today, affecting an estimated 28% of children in California alone, most of whom are children from low-income families with little or no dental insurance. The prevalence of junk food, soda, and juice in children’s diets is a major cause of tooth decay, as is poor dental hygiene. Reducing sugar intake, and brushing and flossing daily are important first steps toward healthy teeth. Please contact a dentist for advice. **brush. floss. flourish.™**

Viveka Å. Rydell Executive Director Louis Ponick Program Coordinator Sandra Echavarria Case Manager Kate Horton Americorps*VISTA

1025 North Dutton Ave., Suite A, Santa Rosa, CA 95401, PH: 707-575-9662 FAX: 707-575-9664 info@pedidental.org