THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY ORAL HEALTH REPORT 2009

Prepared for the San Diego County Dental Health Coalition
The San Diego County Oral Health Report 2009

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Dear Friends:

We are pleased to share the San Diego County Oral Health Report 2009 with you. This report was prepared for the San Diego County Dental Health Coalition and provides a picture of oral health in San Diego County. The information contained in this report is intended to inspire the next steps towards improving the oral health of our community.

This report highlights the progress made by our many community partners and agencies towards improving oral health. It also contains data from local, state, and national sources. It shows that progress has been made, but that oral health disparities still exist among some of our most vulnerable populations.

Oral health is important to overall health. This is especially true for children. The oral health of children is vital to their success in school, and good oral health care in childhood ensures a healthier adulthood. Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease among children in California, and kids who have untreated decay are often in pain, cannot concentrate, miss school, and get poor grades.

The San Diego County Oral Health Report 2009 provides a framework for improving oral health in the coming years. We want to thank the San Diego County Dental Health Coalition for supporting the compilation of this report. We would also like to thank our many community partners who provide education, access to services, and support for oral health initiatives reflected in this report. Together we can improve oral health in our county!

Sincerely,

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San Diego County Dental Society
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San Diego Fluoridation Coalition
San Diego Hispanic Dental Society
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SDSU Pre-Dental Program
Southern Indian Health Center, Inc.
Southwestern College Dental Hygiene Program
UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic and Pre-Dental Society
Valley Center-Pauma Unified School District
Vista Community Clinic
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Oral and dental diseases are widespread in the United States, yet receive such little attention that they were referred to as “silent epidemics” in the landmark 2000 U.S. Surgeon General’s Oral Health Report. Dental caries remain the single most common chronic disease among children in America, with five times as many sufferers as asthma. Nationally, half of all children have untreated tooth decay by age 9 and 70% have at least one cavity by 18. In 2005, it was reported that 28%, some 750,000 of California’s elementary school children had untreated tooth decay. One hundred eight million American adults and children lack dental insurance, and many more Americans do not have access to dental services because of a lack of dental providers in their area or a lack of dental providers willing to accept the insurance they do have. Water fluoridation and dental sealants have been shown to prevent dental disease and reduce health-care costs over time, yet 100 million Americans still lack access to adequate fluoride in their drinking water and only 10% of the highest risk children have dental sealants.

The 2002 report established an action plan in an effort to address the needs in San Diego County. The following five actions comprised the 2002 report’s action plan: 1) At-risk populations must be educated about dental disease, its impacts, consequences, and prevention; 2) At-risk populations must be given access to preventive measures such as sealants, fluoride supplements, varnishes and gels, and optimally fluoridated water; 3) A dental home and regular dental visits for assessment, cleaning and oral hygiene instruction/education must be available to all; 4) Efforts must be taken to increase the number of practicing dental professionals in areas of the county that are historically underserved; and 5) Government-sponsored plans should be encouraged to maintain stability and reimburse at equitable rates. There must be incentives for providers to accept government sponsored insurance plans.

The 2009 report that follows is a non-inclusive summary of progress toward each of the 2002 action plan actions and concludes with a new action plan. The following seven actions comprise the proposed new San Diego County Oral Health Action Plan and will be further discussed at the next San Diego County Oral Health Forum scheduled for late 2009 or early 2010:

1. Address oral health literacy to improve oral health;
2. Increase access to oral health care by increasing access to treatment and prevention services;
3. Improve enrollment, retention, and utilization of government sponsored and private dental programs;
4. Maintain and expand community water fluoridation efforts;
5. Address links between systemic and chronic diseases and oral health;
6. At a state and federal level, expand eligibility and benefits of government sponsored and private dental programs; and
7. At a state and federal level, increase participation of private dentists in government sponsored dental programs.

Oral health must remain a priority in San Diego County and continued success will depend on establishing and maintaining strong collaborations with traditional and nontraditional partners. In the current economic and political environment, new interdisciplinary relationships will greatly maximize dwindling resources. Working together we can greatly improve the quality of oral health in San Diego County.
The San Diego County Oral Health Report 2009 is an update to the 2002 San Diego County Dental Health Report. It documents the progress towards achieving the 2002 report’s action plan and highlights the efforts of San Diego County’s many community partners to improve oral health. In addition, the 2009 report references county, state, and national data sources between 2002 and 2008. While not inclusive, this report reflects progress toward addressing the oral health needs of San Diego County residents. The 2009 report also proposes a new oral health action plan for the coming years.

Since 2002, State Legislation in areas such as school entry oral health assessments, fluoride varnish application, and access to dental services for pregnant women has brought increasing attention to the need for dental health services. Local activities and programs to address oral health have grown and strengthened as a result.

National Dental Crisis

Oral and dental diseases are widespread in the United States, yet receive such little attention that they were referred to as “silent epidemics” in the landmark 2000 U.S. Surgeon General report, Oral Health in America. In 2003, the National Call To Action To Promote Oral Health (Call to Action) was released as a follow-up to Oral Health in America. The Call to Action was an invitation to expand plans, activities, and programs designed to promote oral health and prevent disease, especially to reduce the health disparities that affect members of racial and ethnic groups, the poor, those who are geographically isolated, and others who are vulnerable because of special oral health care needs.

Dental caries remain the single most common chronic disease among children in America, with five times as many sufferers as asthma. Half of all children have untreated tooth decay by age 9 and 70% have at least one cavity by 18. Additionally, 30% of Americans over the age of 65 have no teeth.

Water fluoridation and dental sealants have been shown to prevent dental disease and reduce health-care costs over time, yet 100 million Americans still lack access to adequate fluoride in their drinking water and only 10% of the highest risk children have dental sealants.

One hundred eight million American adults and children lack dental insurance, a strong predictor of access to dental care. This number is more than twice as many as lack medical insurance. Children from families without dental insurance are three times more likely to have dental needs than children with either public or private insurance and they are two and a half times less likely than insured children to receive dental care.

Many Americans do not have access to dental services because of a lack of dental providers in their area or a lack of dental providers willing to accept their insurance. This was the case for a 12 year old Maryland boy whose untreated tooth decay caused his death. His death could have been avoided by a simple procedure that would have cost about $100.
Local Efforts

In 2002, the San Diego County Dental Health Coalition, a coalition formed in 1994 and made up of organizations and agencies committed to improving the oral health of San Diego County residents, compiled the Dental Health Report for San Diego County. The 2002 report was a response to concerns about local oral health needs expressed by community partners and stakeholders at the 2000 San Diego County Dental Health Forum.

The 2002 report demonstrated that oral health in San Diego County was undervalued as a serious health concern and that comprehensive data reflecting the oral health of county residents was lacking. However, the local data that were available indicated that dental disease was underestimated and remarkably prevalent:

- In a 1999 screening of 4,451 local 2nd-5th graders, 30% had visibly untreated cavities and 74% had active gum disease.\(^5\)
- In a 2000 needs assessment of South Bay Mexican-American preschool children, 59% had visible dental caries.\(^6\)
- Tooth decay was the most common well-child exam diagnosis in the San Diego County Child Health and Disability Prevention Program.\(^7\)

Additionally, the 2002 report brought to light the lack of dental coverage among children living in San Diego County, estimating that there were potentially 216,000 children without dental insurance.\(^8\) The 2002 report also showed that there were a limited number of community clinics, dental providers accepting Denti-Cal (Medi-Cal’s dental coverage program), and other no or low cost dental providers.\(^9\)

Pooling input from community partners and utilizing strategies from Oral Health in America, the 2002 report established an action plan in an effort to address oral health needs in San Diego County. The following five actions comprised the 2002 report’s action plan:

1. At-risk populations must be educated about dental disease, its impacts, consequences, and prevention;
2. At-risk populations must be given access to preventive measures such as sealants, fluoride supplements, varnishes and gels, and optimally fluoridated water;
3. A dental home and regular dental visits for assessment, cleaning and oral hygiene instruction/education must be available to all;
4. Efforts must be taken to increase the number of practicing dental professionals in areas of the county that are historically underserved; and
5. Government-sponsored plans should be encouraged to maintain stability and reimburse at equitable rates. There must be incentives for providers to accept government sponsored insurance plans.

The following sections contain a non-inclusive summary of progress for each of the five action plan actions from the 2002 report. Descriptions of the programs and projects referenced can be found in Appendix 1.
Health behaviors as they relate to dental disease are generally reactive rather than proactive or preventive. Educational information about fluoride, sealants, regular dental examinations, and even dietary information should be provided to the community in multiple venues and by multiple means. Education can be provided in a clinical setting, in a classroom, via electronic means, or through educational materials.

Public Sector Programs Working to Improve Oral Health Education

► Neighborhoods for Kids (NFK) sent informational packets to all foster caregivers explaining the need for dental care and gave information on dental care resources. NFK has served nearly 400 children in foster care since 2004.

► Oral health was added to the County of San Diego East Region’s Organizational Improvement Plan beginning in 2006. The Region’s efforts to improve oral health included increasing the rate of East Region children and youth in out-of-home placement receiving dental examinations and developing action plans to address dental care in East Region through educational outreach activities.

► The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency’s Dental Health Initiative of San Diego/Share the Care program trained nearly 7,500 community based organization staff members on oral health. Additionally, STC collaborated with the County of San Diego Immunization Branch to promote cross-threaded health messages. The collaboration resulted in the creation of two interactive education materials that included oral health, as well as school health, nutrition, and physical activity messages.

School-Based Dental Health Programs Working to Improve Oral Health Education

► First Years Escondido educated more than 3,000 parents, pregnant women, and children on dental hygiene and the affect of dental disease on a child’s long term health.

► Happy Smiles, San Diego Unified School District’s dental disease prevention program, served children in 52 schools participating in the free or reduced lunch program. Annually, Happy Smiles reached nearly 9,200 children who would otherwise not have been exposed to dental disease prevention education.

► Since 2002, the San Diego Children’s Dental Disease Prevention Program, better known as Smiles, provided oral health education annually to more than 30,000 children ages 3-11 and their families at elementary schools that had a 50% or greater number of children receiving free lunch. Participating students experienced a 30% reduction in cavities as a result of the program.10
The Migrant Education Program of Valley Center-Pauma Unified School District educated staff, parents, and students about the prevention of dental disease. Parents were also taught about the transmission of cavities, and both parents and students were taught about dental hygiene.

Community Dental Clinics Working to Improve Oral Health Education

Both dentists and students at the University of California San Diego’s (UCSD) Student-Run Free Dental Clinic taught patients about the importance of oral hygiene. Additionally, UCSD pre-dental students volunteered to teach oral health care to students at local schools.

Community clinics and programs participating in the First 5 Oral Health Initiative (OHI), which began in 2005, provided oral health education to parents, caregivers, and pregnant women for the promotion of good oral health. To date, OHI has provided education and training to more than 37,000 parents and primary caregivers and more than 7,200 pregnant women. In addition, OHI provided training and education to childcare providers and community based organizations who interact with children 0 to 5 and pregnant women. In total, 1,563 such providers were trained. OHI participating clinics and programs are listed in Appendix 2.

Over the past seven years, Children’s Dental Health Association of San Diego provided information through various outreach activities to increase the public’s awareness of costs incurred due to dental disease, possible medical complications related to dental disease, and the importance of establishing a dental home.

Dental Professional Organizations Working to Improve Oral Health Education

Members of the San Diego County Dental Hygienists’ Society provided demonstrations on methods for effective brushing and flossing and disseminated toothbrushes and floss to local schools. In addition, materials were made available to others interested in classroom oral health education.

San Diego Hispanic Dental Association and its members lent their expertise to keeping the community aware of the current oral health needs of San Diego’s Hispanic population. Members spoke on such topics as infant oral health and access to care through various outlets including Univision, a Spanish-language television station, and “Health Habits for Life”, a 2007 series of health seminars for health care professionals.

The San Diego County Dental Society (SDCDS) and its members provided education about dental disease through community outreach. Examples of this outreach included a partnership with Oak Park Elementary School to provide age-appropriate oral health books and education. The Oak Park/SDCDS partnership won the 2004 ADA Golden Apple Award and two Exemplary Partnership Awards from the San Diego Unified School District. SDCDS’s speakers’ bureau and websites also provided San Diego County residents with oral health educational opportunities.

Staff at each of San Diego County’s four Head Start programs received oral health education training. Notably, in 2004 Episcopal Community Services became a part of the First Smiles Project, an oral health education and training project of the California Dental Association Foundation and the Dental Health Foundation.

59% of kindergarteners in an East County school district had a history of tooth decay, with nearly half of those students needing urgent dental treatment.
Non-Profit Organizations Working to Improve Oral Health Education

- Since 2005, community-based organizations aligned as the East Region Collaborative Network incorporated oral health education as an area of emphasis for their Community Services for Families partnership with the County of San Diego. These efforts included the promotion of oral health as a health priority, education about school oral health assessment requirements, and the establishment of two new venues for public education and awareness about the impacts of dental disease.

- The Mountain Empire Collaborative provided toothbrushes, dental clinic maps, and oral health education to East County San Diego through health fairs, family nights, parent education classes, and schools.

- First 5 San Diego funded the “Health and Oral Health Media Campaign” in 2005. The campaign, a joint effort of KPBS San Diego and Channel 10 News, provided health and oral health education to the community through television, radio, and the internet, in addition to various trainings, print materials, and community events. The campaign highlighted the importance of preventative health care and good oral health for young children.

- Between 2003 and 2008, the Pediatrician Education Project for Family Health disseminated more than 130,000 blended health materials that provided information and referrals to children’s health coverage and a medical/dental home.

Educating Dental, Medical, and Other Professionals about Oral Health

- First 5 Oral Health Initiative (OHI) trained dental professionals, primary care providers, and prenatal care providers about the oral health needs of children 0 to 5 and pregnant women. As a result, a total of 533 dental and medical professionals were trained. OHI also hosted annual oral health conferences that brought together community health and private practice dental providers.

- The National Hispanic Dental Association Convention was held in San Diego in 2002. The San Diego Hispanic Dental Association hosted the convention and topics such as access to care, current research, and diversity issues were presented to dental and other health professionals.

- The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency’s Dental Health Initiative of San Diego/Share the Care (STC) program trained more than 7,300 medical and dental professionals about oral health. Included among those trained were public health nurses and social workers, who in years past had not typically dealt with dental issues. STC also trained pediatricians and staff on fluoride varnish use and application.

Oral Health ranked 3rd as a health issue priority area for children 0 to 14 years in the Community Health Improvement Partners’ Charting the Course V: 2007 San Diego County Health Needs Assessment.
Oral health education alone cannot prevent dental disease. Access to proven preventive measures in San Diego County are necessary to ensure that vulnerable populations receive dental care.

**Increasing Access to Sealants and Fluoride Varnish**

- Effective June 1, 2006, fluoride varnish application became a new benefit available to all Medi-Cal enrolled children under age six, including children pre-enrolled through the Child Health and Disability Prevention Program Gateway. This made the preventive benefits of fluoride varnish available to children at a primary care provider’s office. As a result, in 2006, 19 children had received a fluoride varnish application in San Diego County. That number grew to 214 in 2007 and by 2008, 1,109 children had received a fluoride varnish application from a primary care provider in San Diego County.\(^\text{13}\)

- Since 2002, Children’s Dental Health Association of San Diego placed 21,298 sealants on nearly 8,000 children and gave fluoride treatments to 1,438 children. These services were provided at more than 30 schools participating in the free or reduced lunch program.

- Since 2002, the Dental Health Initiative of San Diego/Share the Care program, along with its community partners, facilitated 26 dental sealant and fluoride varnish clinics throughout San Diego County. These clinics provided more than 1,600 children with fluoride varnish applications and roughly 13,000 dental sealants to nearly 2,000 children. In total, the clinics provided approximately $750,000 worth of pro bono preventative dental health services to children with no or limited dental resources. A list of organizations who donated funding, resources, and staff for these events is listed in Appendix 3.

In 2007, San Diego County ranked among the top 10 California counties with Medi-Cal enrolled children ages 5-6 receiving first molar sealants and among the top 5 for ages 11-12 receiving second molar sealants.\(^\text{14}\)
The First 5 Oral Health Initiative made access to sealants, fluoride supplements, and varnishes/gels for children 0 to 5 and pregnant women a standard of practice at participating clinics and programs. Some highlights are listed below:

- La Maestra Dental Clinics placed over 3,000 sealants and applied over 10,000 fluoride varnishes/gels.
- Family Health Centers of San Diego provided sealants and fluoride varnish/gel to over 50,000 patients.

Dental hygiene students at the Southwestern College Dental Hygiene Program provided free dental hygiene services, sealants, and fluoride treatments to over 1,700 community members each year.

Annually, approximately 3,000 students participating in the Smiles program received fluoride varnish application and/or dental sealants.

Happy Smiles provided weekly fluoride mouth rinses to more than 9,200 children annually. Additionally, dental sealants, fluoride varnish, and dental examinations/screenings were provided to children.

Increasing Access to Community Water Fluoridation

The City of Escondido began fluoridating its water in August 2004 and as of October 2007, Metropolitan and Helix Water Districts were fluoridating water at optimal levels (0.7 – 1.2 parts per million). With these efforts, the following water districts in San Diego County had optimal fluoride levels as of fall 2008: Carlsbad; Escondido/Rincon Del Diablo; Fallbrook; Helix; Padre Dam; Rainbow; Ramona; Vallecitos; Valley Center; and Vista. Other water districts began receiving fluoridated water but have blended water, meaning that on any given day the fluoride content would be considered suboptimal. A map of fluoridation in San Diego County can be found in Appendix 4.

In November 2007, First 5 Commission of San Diego County (Commission) voted unanimously to support local water fluoridation efforts. The Commission has since dedicated $6.7 million for the purposes of implementing community water fluoridation. The Commission designated the City of San Diego as the first to receive the funds with the remaining balance to be dispersed among other water districts.

The U.S. is close to reaching the Healthy People 2010 objective to have 75% of the population receiving optimally fluoridated water. As of 2006, 69% of the population was served by water systems with optimally fluoridated water.15
**2002 Action # 3:**
A dental home and regular dental visits for assessment, cleaning, and oral hygiene instruction/education must be available to all.

Although proven effective in preventing dental diseases, the preventive methods mentioned previously when standing alone do not constitute regular dental care. Furthermore, safety net programs offering urgent care services, although much needed, only serve to mend the problem temporarily if clients served are not directed to a dental home. For children and families with private or public insurance coverage, a dental provider should be selected and seen. For those without insurance, a relationship with a community based clinic should be established.

**Finding a Dental Home**

- The *San Diego County Dental Society* assisted people with finding a dental home through its telephone referral service and website. In addition, residents with low incomes were referred to community dental care resources.

- Between 2002 and 2008, the County of San Diego Maternal, Child, and Family Health Services Phone Line received 1,331 calls about dental care needs and assisted these callers with referrals to dental providers.

- 211 San Diego provided information, including help with finding a dental provider, to more than 180,000 clients each year. In addition, 211 San Diego partnered with *First 5 San Diego*, to refer families with young children to *First 5 San Diego Oral Health Initiative* programs where children 0-5 and pregnant women could access dental checkups, treatment, and support services.

- In 2006, San Diego’s three dental coalitions, *North County Dental Task Force, East County Dental Task Force*, and *San Diego County Dental Health Coalition*, created dental resource road maps for north, east, central, and south San Diego County. These road maps were created with the intent that they would serve as an easy-to-read tool for the community to use to access dental care. To date, it is estimated that roughly 10,000 road maps have been distributed in the community with the help of the coalition members. A list of participating coalition members is in Appendix 5.

**Accessing a Dental Home**

- As of 2003 in San Diego County, 70.3% of persons aged 2 years and older had a dental visit in the preceding 12 months and 77.3% of low-income youth (0-199% Federal Poverty Level) aged 2 through 18 years, had a dental visit in the preceding 12 months.\(^1\)

- Between 2001 and 2003, the percentage of households in San Diego County with a child ages 1 - 18 that used dental care services for cavity and/or emergency treatment in the past 12 months rose from 76.3% to 82.1%.\(^1\) In 2005, 13.6% of San Diego County children ages 2-11 had never been to the dentist.\(^1\)
Improving Access to Dental Assessments

▶ In 2006, a new California law passed that required all children entering public school for the first time, whether at kindergarten or first grade, to obtain an oral health assessment. The ultimate goal of this requirement was to establish a regular source of dental care for every child. The new requirement had a slow start during the 2006-2007 school year with less than half of the nearly 40,000 eligible kindergarten/first grade students submitting an oral health assessment form. Nearly two-thirds of those forms that were submitted were signed by parents who voluntarily chose to waive the assessment. Of those who obtained an assessment, 22.5% were found to have untreated cavities.¹⁹

▶ Neighborhoods for Kids (NFK) in East Region worked to increase the number of children in foster care receiving dental services from a regular source of dental care. Public health nurses and social workers worked in tandem to track dental visits and provided follow-up to ensure each child accessed dental services. By the end of 2008, 79.9% of children in foster care in East Region had received an annual dental examination.

Increasing Dental Services

▶ Beginning in 2005, the First 5 Commission of San Diego has dedicated approximately $5.1 million to its Oral Health Initiative (OHI). Dental health prevention and treatment needs of young children and pregnant women was a key component of OHI. Care coordination services were also provided for children ages 0-5 years and pregnant women to assist with accessing dental services and establishing a dental home. OHI has provided oral health screenings, dental examinations, and treatment with follow-up services to approximately 130,000 children under age 5 and pregnant women.

In fall 2007, there were an average of 4.8 visits per day to school health offices in San Diego County because of dental complaints. This was down from 7.5 visits per day in fall 2006.²⁰
Increasing Dental Facilities and Capacity

- Since 2002, eight new community dental clinics and 36 new dental chairs have been established to provide comprehensive dental care to families with limited financial resources. A map of all community dental clinics is listed in Appendix 6. However, as the map shows, pockets of San Diego County still lack access to dental resources, especially in the rural areas of the county.

- Vista Community Clinic (VCC) opened its first dental operatories in 2004 with the support of an Oral Health Expansion grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration Bureau of Primary Health Care. As a result, VCC was able to increase access to dental care for patients who were eligible for public insurance and those who were uninsured. In 2005, VCC received additional funding from First 5 San Diego for dental equipment.

- In 2007, Operation Samahan (Samahan) clinic in Mira Mesa was given state licensure to open a dental facility with two dental operatories. The dental facility became the dental home to most of Samahan’s medical patients, providing them with oral examinations and assessments, as well as cleaning and oral hygiene instruction and education.

- Since 2002, La Maestra Dental Clinics’ four dental sites provided over 25,000 oral assessments and 11,000 cleanings to San Diego’s uninsured, underinsured, and underserved.

- Neighborhood Healthcare (NHC) served over 15,000 patients living in the communities in and around Lakeside, Escondido, and Pauma Valley, offering preventive and primary dental care services.

- To date, the First 5 Oral Health Initiative has provided more than $900,000 in capital grants to build and enhance dental facilities.

Tooth decay affects almost two-thirds of California children by the third grade and 28% of elementary school children have untreated tooth decay.21
Safety Net Dental Services

- **Dental Health Initiative of San Diego/Share the Care** program linked 544 children to emergency dental treatment. These services were provided as an option of last resort to children without dental insurance or access to a dental home.

- To date, 91 children have received free treatment for restorative dental needs from dentists participating in the **Pediatric Oral Health Access Program** (POHAP). POHAP, which began in San Diego County in 2007, has 36 participating dentists countywide. Many of these dentists have taken on the children they have seen as pro bono patients of record for long-term, on-going care.

- In 2002, **Children’s Dental Health Association of San Diego** created “Meet the Need”, a program that provided emergency dental care for children. Children who were served by this program did not have dental insurance and had no means to pay for dental treatment. Between June 2004 and May 2007, 373 children from 71 county schools received free dental services valued at more than $111,000.

- The dental clinic at **Rady Children’s Hospital** saw more than 9,000 patients. Patients received oral assessments, hygiene instruction, and education. Uninsured and underinsured patients were referred to the **Anderson Center for Dental Care** (Anderson Center) for assistance through grants and private donations. Anderson Center also worked with the dental community to improve access to dental providers who would see children with special needs.

- **University of California San Diego’s Student-Run Free Dental Clinic** provided free dental check-ups, cleanings, and treatment to existing patients. Its three clinics provided dental care to patients from the Downtown, Pacific Beach, and Logan Heights areas of San Diego.

- **Southwestern College Dental Hygiene Program** staff and students provided free dental hygiene services to over 1,700 community members each year. The program mostly served the National City area in South Bay San Diego County.

- The **San Diego Hispanic Dental Association (SDHDA)** sponsored an oral health fair in Chula Vista where it performed dental screenings. Additionally, in 2003 SDHDA offered free dental services to 200 underserved children in San Diego as a part of the **Trident Cares Community Outreach Dental Program**.

- Over the past four years, **Southern Indian Health Center, Inc. (SIHC)** provided nearly 1,200 dental screenings in East County San Diego and on local Indian Reservations. Additionally, SIHC dentists volunteered to perform dental screenings for two East County school districts and the East County Foster Kid Program.

Out of 25 states surveyed, only Arkansas ranked below California in children’s dental health.¹⁶
If efforts to promote assessments and linkages to a dental home are successful, there still remains the critical problem of meeting the needs of a continuously growing population. San Diego County is geographically large and currently has 18 designated* dental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA).22 (There were only six dental HPSA in 2002.) However, there are also areas with an overwhelmingly high density of dental professionals. New and existing dental professionals should be encouraged to serve vulnerable communities and those areas with limited dental care services.

Increasing the Number of Dental Professionals

► La Maestra Dental Clinics (La Maestra) increased the number of dental professionals providing dental services by 350%. This increase enabled La Maestra to provide 70,000 patient visits and deliver over 235,000 dental procedures since 2002.

► Vista Community Clinic (VCC) was a training site for the Palomar College Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) training program and provided job training for newly educated RDAs. The Palomar College internship, in partnership with VCC, placed dental assistants for experience in pediatric and pedodontic dentistry.

► The Community Health and Medical Practices (CHAMPS) program at Crawford High School in City Heights exposed high school students to healthcare careers including dentistry, dental assisting, dental hygiene, and dental laboratory technology.

► San Diego County Dental Society (SDCDS) was active in encouraging and nurturing pre-dental and dental hygiene students. SDCDS helped fund the UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic, provided scholarships to pre-dental students, and participated in the CHAMPS healthcare careers program.

► The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency’s Dental Health Initiative of San Diego/Share the Care program provided oral health internships to more than 350 pre-dental, dental hygiene, dental assisting, dietetic, and public health students since 2002, exposing them to other aspects of their careers.

*There are three different types of HPSA designations: geographic area; population groups; and facilities

In 2003, only half of dentists in California employed hygienists, and of those who did, 46% had openings for a hygienist position.23
Anderson Center for Dental Care (Anderson Center) at Rady Children’s Hospital spearheaded the planning and establishment of the Rady Children’s Hospital Pediatric Dental Residency Program in response to the shortage of pediatric dentists and general dentists who would treat very young children and disabled children in San Diego County. The program began in July 2003 and has graduated eight pediatric dental residents as of spring 2008. Anderson Center also held training sessions for several hundred dental professionals to equip them with skills to treat very young children and disabled children.

As of May 2009, the Dental Assisting Program at San Diego Mesa College will have graduated 147 dental assistants since 2002.

Southwestern College Dental Hygiene Program began in 2002 and has graduated 172 dental hygienists. The program, operating out of the National City Southwestern College site, is the only dental hygiene program in San Diego County.

San Diego State University’s Pre-dental Program served as a resource to students interested in the field of dentistry. Students participated in community service activities, clinic observations, and presentations and workshops. Additionally, students provided oral health and hygiene education in the community.

The University of California San Diego Pre-Dental Society (UCSD PDS) provided members with hands-on experience with dentists and helped members with dental school admissions. The UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic is a project of UCSD PDS. The project and the UCSD PDS won the American Dental Association Golden Apple Award in 2005 for Achievement in Dental School/Student Involvement in Organized Dentistry. This was the first time an undergraduate pre-dental program not affiliated with a dental school won in this category.

San Diego Hispanic Dental Association (SDHDA) supported the licensing of a Mexican Dental School in California, “Universidad De La Salle”, which graduated Spanish-speaking dentists who will practice in California’s Latino communities. Additionally, SDHDA has worked with Latino’s for Dental Careers, the California Welcome Back International Health Care worker assistance program, and dental mentoring programs to increase the number of dental professionals working from and in the Latino community.

Shortages of dental assistants were experienced by only 20% of all California dentists.23
As stated previously, if efforts to promote access to care are successful, resources for that care need to be made available. Furthermore, with recent legislation intended to increase the use of dental services, (e.g., public school oral health assessment requirement), government-sponsored plans will be needed more than ever to meet the new demand.

**Government-Sponsored Dental Benefit Programs Impacting San Diego County**

- In California, Denti-Cal provider reimbursement rates were among the lowest in the nation and only 40% of California's private dentists were accepting Denti-Cal reimbursement.\(^{24}\)

- In October 2005, the Governor signed a law that provided coverage of certain non-emergency dental benefits to pregnant Medi-Cal beneficiaries. This expanded dental services for pregnant women to include examinations, prophylaxis, and topical application of fluoride among other procedures.

- In 2008, the California Department of Health Care Services implemented a 10% payment reduction to Denti-cal providers.\(^{25}\)

**Utilization of Government-Sponsored Dental Benefit Programs**

- Since 2002, tooth decay has remained the most common well child diagnosis of the San Diego County Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP). Additionally, in 2004, state CHDP began recommending that all CHDP providers refer children to a dentist starting at one year of age. This recommendation came after the May 2003 American Academy of Pediatrics release of a policy statement making the same recommendation.

- There are approximately 160,000 children 0-20 on Denti-Cal insurance in San Diego County.\(^{26}\) Only 16.9% of Denti-Cal beneficiaries ages 0 to 5 and 36.5% Denti-Cal beneficiaries ages 6 to 12 were utilizing dental services in San Diego County. Less than 1/3 of all other age groups were utilizing services.\(^{27}\) Nationally, only one in three Medicaid-enrolled children used dental services in a year.\(^{28}\)

- Nearly two out of five (39%) California adults do not have dental insurance coverage and 60% of adults aged 18 to 64 with Medi-Cal do not know that they have dental benefits.\(^{29}\) Nationally, only about one in four dentists were participating in Medicaid. Dentists’ reasons for not participating were mainly due to inadequate reimbursements for treating Medicaid beneficiaries.\(^{30}\)

**Working to Improve Government-Sponsored Dental Benefit Program Enrollment, Retention, and Utilization**

- Between 2002 and 2008, San Diego Kids Health Assurance Network (SD-KHAN) assisted 39,866 uninsured children and their families with applications to Healthy Families, Medi-Cal/Denti-Cal, and Kaiser health plans. In addition, SD-KHAN encouraged the retention and utilization of these insurance plans through phone contacts and direct mailings to 2,664 children and their families.

Approximately 25% of Medi-Cal beneficiaries under 12 had never been to a dentist.\(^{24}\)
Oral Health Must Remain a Priority in San Diego County

In order to prioritize the next steps for addressing oral health in San Diego County and to create a new San Diego County Oral Health Action Plan, it was important to pool input from a variety of sources. Healthy People 2010,31 a set of national health objectives managed out of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the National Call To Action To Promote Oral Health2 were reviewed for ideas to expand plans, activities, and programs designed to promote oral health and prevent dental disease. Feedback from San Diego County oral health stakeholders at the 2005 San Diego County Oral Health Forum and information contained in the 2007 San Diego County Child and Family Health and Well-Being Report Card were also reviewed and used to develop a new action plan. A summary matrix of these sources is available in Appendix 7.

Based on the compilation of the above mentioned sources, the following is the proposed new San Diego County Oral Health Action Plan:

1. Address oral health literacy to improve oral health;
2. Increase access to oral health care by increasing access to treatment and prevention services;
3. Improve enrollment, retention, and utilization of government sponsored and private dental programs;
4. Maintain and expand community water fluoridation efforts;
5. Address links between systemic and chronic diseases and oral health;
6. At a state and federal level, expand eligibility and benefits of government sponsored and private dental programs; and
7. At a state and federal level, increase participation of private dentists in government sponsored dental programs.

The proposed new San Diego County Oral Health Action Plan will be further discussed at the next San Diego County Oral Health Forum scheduled for late 2009 or early 2010. There, community feedback and input will be gathered and final concurrence of a new action plan will be reached.

Continued success and forward movement will depend on establishing and maintaining strong collaborations with traditional and nontraditional partners. In the current economic and political environment, new interdisciplinary relationships will greatly maximize dwindling resources. Working together we can greatly improve the quality of oral health in San Diego County.
References


13. California Department of Health Care Services MIS/DSS. Ref. IR5736; Run Date: 1/15/2009 7:59 PM.


References continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/Project</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-1-1 San Diego</td>
<td>A non-profit organization that provides free, confidential, multilingual, 24-hour dialing code for access to community, health, and disaster services and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Health and Disability Prevention Program</td>
<td>A state and federally funded preventive program that delivers periodic health assessments and services to low income children and youth in California. Administered locally by County of San Diego Maternal, Child, and Family Health Services. CHDP Gateway, a pre-enrollment process of the program, links eligible children to ongoing healthcare coverage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Dental Health Association of San Diego</td>
<td>Founded in 1952, provides dental services and education to underprivileged children in San Diego. The Association funds the Children’s Dental Health Center, School-Based Program, and other programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Health Improvement Partners</td>
<td>A collaboration of San Diego health care systems, hospitals, community clinics, insurers, physicians, universities, community benefit organizations and the County of San Diego. Formed in 1995 and is organized under the Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Services for Families</td>
<td>Provides in-home case management and parenting skills development to families who are involved in the Child Welfare System.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council of Community Clinics</td>
<td>Provides centralized support services to 17 member community clinics and health centers operating at nearly 100 sites in San Diego, Imperial, and Riverside Counties. Represents and supports community clinics and health centers in their efforts to provide access to quality health care and related services for the diverse communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Health Initiative of San Diego/Share the Care</td>
<td>A public-private partnership between the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, the San Diego County Dental Society, and the San Diego County Dental Health Coalition. Provides access to emergency dental care for children who qualify and offers education to professionals, parents, and children to foster ongoing preventive dental care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Region Collaborative Network</td>
<td>A network of seven community collaboratives from East County San Diego. Participating communities included El Cajon, Lakeside, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, Mountain Empire, Santee, and Spring Valley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Health Centers of San Diego</td>
<td>A private nonprofit community clinic organization that provides comprehensive, accessible, quality medical and dental healthcare services in the San Diego region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First 5 Commission of San Diego County</td>
<td>Promotes the health and well being of young children from the prenatal stage through five years of age. Its goal is to ensure that every child in San Diego County enters school ready to succeed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First 5 Oral Health Initiative</td>
<td>An initiative of the First 5 Commission of San Diego County to address the oral health needs of San Diego County children ages 0 to 5 and pregnant women. Funds oral health services and education within a network of community clinics and other programs and is housed at the Council of Community Clinics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Years Escondido</td>
<td>Strives to ensure that young children have all the opportunities they need to be successful learners upon entering kindergarten. Serves children from 0-5 years of age and pregnant women that live primarily in the low-income areas of Escondido.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy Smiles Dental Disease Prevention Program</td>
<td>San Diego Unified School District’s dental health program that provides education and services to students in order to help prevent dental disease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start Programs</td>
<td>Federally funded child development programs designed to help break the cycle of poverty by providing preschool children of low- income families with a comprehensive program to meet their needs. In San Diego County there are four Head Start programs that are housed at Alpha Kappa Alpha, Episcopal Community Services, MAAC Project, and Neighborhood House Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Maestra Dental Clinics</td>
<td>A part of La Maestra Community Health Centers. Provides comprehensive oral health care services including screenings, diagnostic, preventive and restorative procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program/Project</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maternal, Child, and Family Health Services Phone Line</td>
<td><em>A toll-free telephone line (1-800-675-2229) that connects uninsured children and pregnant women with low or no-cost health insurance and/or another medical care options. Phone line staff also help with the application process and assist with finding health care providers.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Education Program at Valley Center-Pauma Unified School District</td>
<td><em>A federally funded program that provides supplemental services to pre-K through 12th graders who fall under the migrant identification criteria.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Empire Collaborative</td>
<td><em>Formed in 1999 for the purpose of uniting the residents and communities in rural East County with the groups and agencies serving them.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Healthcare</td>
<td><em>Founded in 1969, provides safety net medical, dental and behavioral health services at its clinics located throughout San Diego and Riverside counties.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhoods for Kids</td>
<td><em>A project of the Health and Human Services Agency in East County San Diego that works with children who are abused or neglected.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North County Health Services</td>
<td><em>A community health center that began in 1970. Provides health and social services in North County San Diego.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation Samahan</td>
<td><em>A community clinic that provides comprehensive health care and health education.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatrician Education Project for Family Health</td>
<td><em>A project of the Healthy Tomorrows Partnerships for Children Grants Program in conjunction with the state chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Dyson Initiative, and the County of San Diego Maternal, Child, and Family Health Services. Its goal is to ensure children have access to a medical/dental home and targeted preventive health messages to improve the health, well-being, and academic performance.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatric Oral Health Access Program</td>
<td><em>A training program for general dentists to learn how to treat young children, including children with physical and developmental disabilities. The program was funded through a grant from the California Endowment and the Los Angeles Care Health Plan’s Oral Health Initiative to the CDA Foundation.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rady Children’s Hospital Pediatric Dental Clinics</td>
<td><em>The clinics were established to improve the oral health and overall pediatric health of San Diego County’s children, especially young children and those with disabilities.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderson Center for Dental Care</td>
<td><em>The center was established at Rady Children’s Hospital to improve the oral health of children, particularly those with early childhood caries or disabilities, through professional and community education, improved access to care, advocacy, and treatment.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego Children’s Dental Disease Prevention Program (Smiles)</td>
<td><em>A state-funded dental health education program aimed at preventing dental disease and is coordinated out of the San Diego County Office of Education.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego County Dental Hygienists’ Society</td>
<td><em>The society and its members work to improve the public’s health by increasing awareness of prevention and ensuring access to quality oral health care. In addition, the society promotes the interests of dental hygienists in San Diego County.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego County Dental Society</td>
<td><em>The society was founded in 1887 and is the largest professional organization representing dentists in San Diego and Imperial Counties with nearly 2,000 member dentists.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego Dental Health Foundation</td>
<td><em>The foundation is a charitable organization established by dentists in San Diego County for the purpose of serving as a philanthropic entity dedicated to promoting public understanding of dental health and funding dental health programs.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego Hispanic Dental Association</td>
<td><em>Member dentists lend their expertise to keeping the community aware of the current oral health needs of San Diego’s Hispanic population.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego Kids Health Assurance Network (SD-KHAN)</td>
<td><em>A group of local community based organizations, hospitals, government agencies, health plans, and schools working together to provide medical and dental coverage for all children in San Diego County. Staff help families find the best health care plans for their children, answer questions about available health care programs, and help families fill out application forms.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program/Project</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego Mesa College Dental Assisting Program</td>
<td>An accredited dental assisting program that introduces students to the clinical, laboratory, and administrative aspects of dentistry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Indian Health Center, Inc.</td>
<td>Provides a comprehensive range of professional health care and social services in a manner respectful of Indian values and traditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwestern College Dental Hygiene Program</td>
<td>An accredited dental hygiene program that prepares graduates for licensure as dental hygienists. Dental Hygiene classes are conducted at the National City Higher Education Center of Southwestern College and the clinic provides hands-on education and experience to students while also offering free preventive dental services to the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of California San Diego’s Student-Run Free Dental Clinic</td>
<td>The clinic provides dental services to San Diego’s underserved. It was launched in 1999 as part of the UCSD School of Medicine Medical Student Run Free Clinic, a community outreach program run by UCSD students and faculty with additional support from community volunteers. The dental clinic is operated under the supervision of licensed volunteer dental professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCSD Pre-Dental Society</td>
<td>The society is a student organization at UCSD that promotes student interest in the field of dentistry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vista Community Clinic</td>
<td>A private, nonprofit community health center that was founded in 1972 to provide quality health care and health education to the community focusing on those facing economic, social, and cultural barriers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First 5 Oral Health Initiative Participating Clinics and Programs:

Anderson Center for Dental Care
Fallbrook Health Centers
Family Health Centers of San Diego
Imperial Beach Health Center
Indian Health Council
La Maestra Community Health Centers
Mountain Health & Community Services
Neighborhood Healthcare
NMA Comprehensive Health Center
North County Health Services
Operation Samahan
San Diego American Indian Health Center
Dental Health Initiative of San Diego/Share the Care
San Diego Family Care
San Ysidro Health Center
SMILES Program
Southern Indian Health Council
Vista Community Clinic
Appendix 3

Organizations Who Donated Funding, Resources, and Staff to San Diego County Dental Sealant and Fluoride Varnish Clinics:

- Anonymous Community Donors
- County Office of Education Smiles Program
- County Supervisor Bill Horn
- County Supervisor Greg Cox
- County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price
- East County Dental Task Force
- Family Health Centers of San Diego
- Grossmont Health Care District
- Health and Human Services Agency
- Migrant Education
- Neighborhood Healthcare
- North County Dental Task Force
- Private Dental Offices
- Operation Samahan
- Rincon Dental Clinic
- San Diego County Dental Hygienists’ Society
- San Diego County Dental Society
- San Diego Hispanic Dental Society
- San Diego Immunization Program
- San Diego Mesa College Dental Assisting Program
- Southwestern College Dental Hygiene Program
- UCSD Pre-Dental Program
### EAST COUNTY DENTAL TASK FORCE

- Aging and Independence Services
- AKA Head Start
- Alliance Healthcare Foundation
- Anderson Center for Dental Care
- Child Welfare Services
- Community Services for Families
- Council of Community Clinics
- Dental Health Initiative/Share the Care
- East County Career Center
- El Cajon Collaborative
- Family Health Center of San Diego
- First 5 Commission of San Diego County
- First 5 Health & Developmental Services Project
- Health and Human Services Agency, East Region
- Home Start
- International Relief Teams
- La Maestra Community Clinic
- La Mesa-Spring Valley School District
- Labor Community Service Agency
- Lakeside Union SD
- Mountain Health & Community Services
- Neighborhood Healthcare
- Rady Children's Hospital
- ROHAP Society
- San Diego County Dental
- Hygienists’ Society
- San Diego County Dental Society
- San Diego Fluoridation Coalition
- San Diego Gas & Electric
- Save-a-Heart
- Smiles Program
- Smiles Within Reach Preventive Dental Health Care
- Southern Indian Health Center
- Southern Indian Health Council, Inc.
- Southwestern College Dental Hygiene Program
- Spring Valley Youth & Family Coalition
- Supervisor Pam Slater-Price's office
- Sycuan Medical Dental Center
- Tooth Mobile
- UCSD Dental Health Initiative/Share the Care
- UCSD Pre-Dental Society
- Welcome Back Center

### NORTH COUNTY DENTAL TASK FORCE

- Access to Care Committee of the San Diego County Dental Society
- Aging & Independence Services
- Anderson Center for Dental Care
- Brother Benno's Foundation
- Center for Healthier Communities, Rady Children's Hospital
- Community Health Systems, Inc.
- Council of Community Clinics
- Dental Health Initiative/Share the Care
- Fallbrook Dental Center
- First Years Escondido
- Health and Human Services Agency, North Regions
- HealthLink
- Hispanic Dental Association
- Hope Housing
- MAAC Project Head Start
- Migrant Education
- Mountain Health
- Neighborhood Healthcare
- North County Health Services
- Operation Samahan
- Paradise Fire Relief Committee
- Rady Children's Hospital
- San Diego County Dental Society
- Smiles Program
- Southwestern College
- Supervisor Horn's Office
- Supervisor Pam Slater-Price's Office
- UCSD Cancer Center
- UCSD Dental Health Initiative/Share the Care
- Valley Center-Pauma Unified School District
- Vista Community Clinic
- YMCA

### SAN DIEGO DENTAL HEALTH COALITION

- American Red Cross WIC Program
- AKA Head Start
- Children's Dental Health Association
- Community Health Improvement Partners
- Council of Community Clinics
- Dental Health Foundation
- Dental Health Initiative/Share the Care
- ECS Head Start
- Family Health Centers of San Diego
- First Years Escondido
- Happy Smiles Program
- Health and Human Services Agency, East Region
- North Regions
- South Region
- Hispanic Dental Association
- La Maestra Family Health Centers
- Neighborhood Healthcare
- North County Health Services
- Operation Samahan
- Por La Vida SDSU
- Radcliffe Publishing
- Rady Children's Hospital
- Safeguard Health Enterprises, Inc.
- San Diego American Indian Health Center
- San Diego County Dental Hygienists' Society
- San Diego County Dental Society
- San Diego Family Care
- San Diego Fluoridation Coalition
- San Diego Gas & Electric
- Smiles Program
- Southwestern College
- St. Vincent De Paul Village
- UCSD Student-Run Free Dental Clinic
- UCSD Dental Health Initiative/Share the Care
- Vista Community Clinic
- YMCA
Community Dental Health Resources in San Diego County

1. Fallbrook Family Health Center
2. North County Health Services-Oceanside
3. Neighborhood Healthcare-Pauma Valley
4. Vista Community Clinic
5. North County Health Services-San Marcos
6. Neighborhood Healthcare-Escondido
7. Indian Health Council
8. North County Health Services-Ramona
9. Operation Samahan-Mira Mesa
10. Neighborhood Healthcare-Lakeview
11. Sycuan Indian Health Dental Center
12. Southern Indian Health Council, Inc.-Alpine
13. La Maestra Community Health Centers-El Cajon
14. Family Health Centers of San Diego-Grossmont/Spring Valley
15. San Ysidro Health Care Center
16. La Maestra Community Health Centers-Lemon Grove
17. Southern Indian Health Council, Inc.- Campo
18. Rady Children’s Hospital Pediatric Dental Clinic
19. San Diego American Indian Health Center
20. Family Health Centers of San Diego-Hillcrest
21. La Maestra Community Health Centers-Fairmount
22. Children’s Dental Health Association of San Diego
23. Family Health Centers of San Diego Logan Heights
24. Comprehensive Health Center
25. La Maestra Community Health Centers-University Ave.
26. Southwestern College Dental Hygiene Program
27. South Bay Family Dental Clinic
28. Operation Samahan-National City
## Appendix 7

### Source Summary Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Goals, Findings, and Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Healthy People 2010                                                   | Objectives for Improving Health: Objective 21, Oral Health  
Prevent and control oral and craniofacial diseases, conditions, and injuries and improve access to related services.                                                                                             |
| National Call To Action To Promote Oral Health: A Public-Private Partnership under the leadership of The Office of the Surgeon General | • Change perceptions of oral health;  
• Overcome barriers by replicating effective programs and proven efforts;  
• Build the science base and accelerate science transfer;  
• Increase oral health workforce diversity, capacity, and flexibility; and  
• Increase collaborations.                                                                                                       |
| 2005 San Diego County Oral Health Forum                               | • Increase oral health education;  
• Increase access to dental care;  
• Establish policies/legislation related to dental health; and  
• Expand community water fluoridation.                                                                                              |
| 2007 San Diego County Child and Family Health and Well-Being Report Card | Work with public health, community clinics, health care agencies, medical and dental associations, faith communities, and local media partners to:  
• assure that all children eligible for Medi-Cal coverage are enrolled using outreach for enrollment campaigns;  
• provide training to primary health care providers and early childhood education providers about how to educate parents about the importance of oral health and how to screen children for oral health problems; and  
• expand capacity in the “dental care safety net,” including placement of dentists in community clinics, mobile dental services, and prevention services in early care and education settings, elementary schools, and after school programs. |