



# Dental Days at WIC

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# Dental Caries in the United States

- Dental caries is the most common chronic childhood disease – five times more common than asthma.
- 1/3 of California pre-school children have tooth decay
- Decay in children 2-5 years has increased 24%.

CDC 2007

Photos courtesy of PDI Surgery Center



# The Obesity-Dental Disease Connection

- Childhood obesity is an epidemic in California
- Obesity and dental caries share contributing factors
- Childhood obesity and early dental infection have life-long consequences

# Why Dental at WIC?

Healthy nutrition behaviors reduce the risk of developing tooth decay



- Healthy mouths help a child to eat the proper foods needed for growth and development

# Access Issues

- Few dental providers who accept public assistance insurance plans
- Few providers who see children under age 5
- Number of insured children has increase with Affordable Care Act.
- Having insurance doesn't guarantee access



# WIC-A Likely Partner

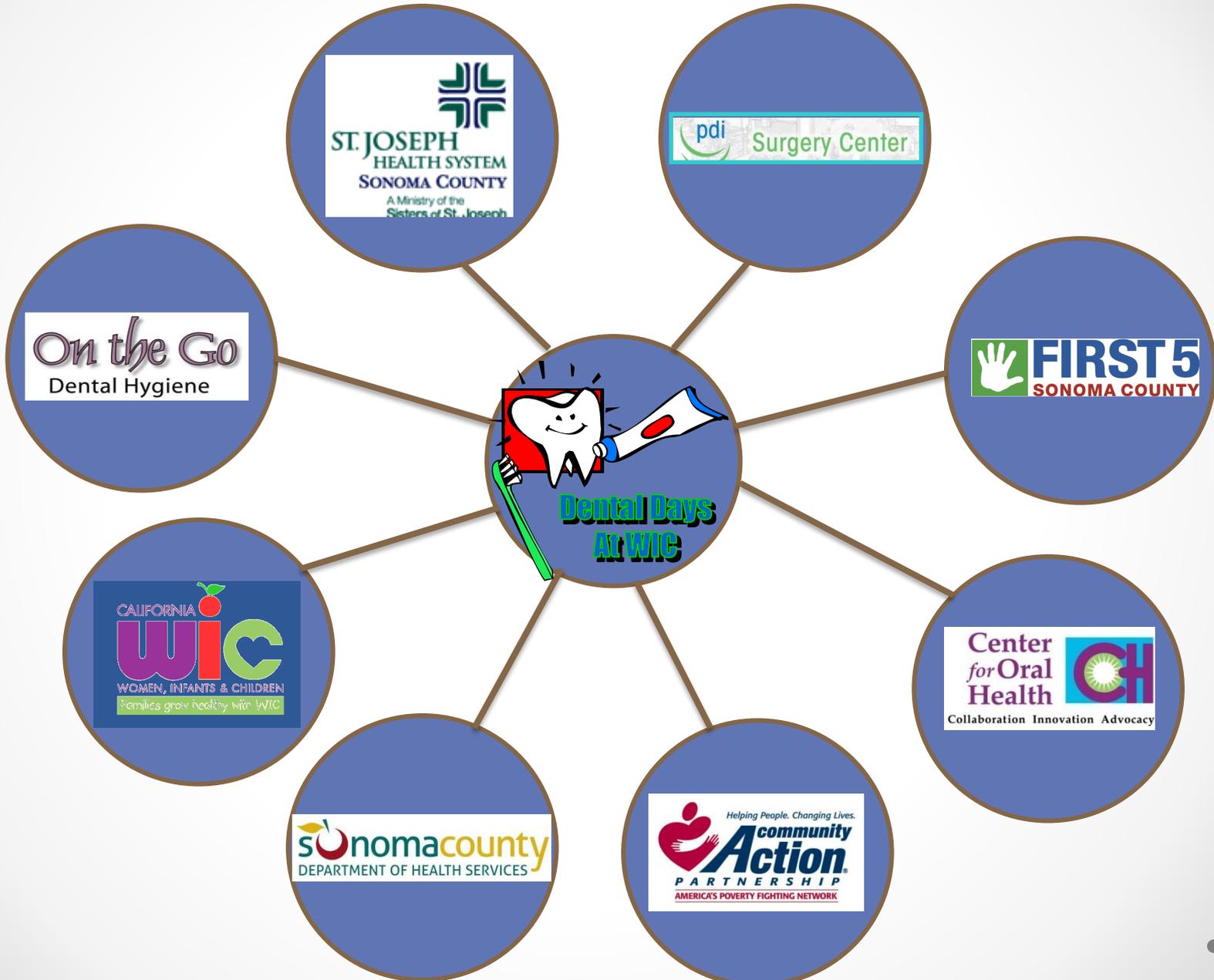
- Promotes nutrition and dietary practices essential to overall health **And** to the prevention of dental disease
- Participants at high risk for disease
- Trusted and safe environment
- A familiar location



# Keys to Successful Collaboration

- Common Goal
- Communication and Mutual Respect
- Identifying and developing partnerships
- Be flexible and have fun
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# Necessary Partners

- Provider and staff
- WIC Director and Staff
- Supervising Agency- Public Health, CBO
- Local providers for treatment referrals
- Funders



# Registered Dental Hygienist in Alternative Practice (RDHAP)



- An additional license with the State of California
- Practice without supervision of a Dentist
- Recognized providers for insurance companies such as Denti-Cal

Kathy Kane RDHAP

# Dental Days at WIC

- Brings providers to children
- Increase the number of at risk 1 yr. olds who receive dental visits
- Increase caregiver knowledge about preventive care
- Teach nutrition promoting behavior changes that last a lifetime



# Oral Health Education for Parents



# Oral Assessment



- Toothbrush Cleaning and Fluoride Varnish Application

# Lessons Learned

- Early intervention
- Behavior change involves parent buy in
- Educate caregivers
- Promotes WIC in the community



# Challenges

- Just one more thing...
- Integrating into the normal WIC services
- Staying true to the WIC mission
- Nutrition education encounter
- Scheduling appointments and return visits

# What worked

- Timing of Implementation
- Starting slowly
- Staff meetings
- Educating dental about WIC and WIC about dental
- Listening to each other- joint problem solving combining expertise and experience
- Flexibility- making changes as program evolved



# Outcomes

- 9259 visits February 2010-December, 2014
- 6499 Unique individuals
- 1561 referred for treatment
- Education
- >80% of return visits have no cavities
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# It takes a team...

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