



DELTA DENTAL OF MINNESOTA



Making a Healthy Difference Through Service

Serve a Smile Project Ideas

This year's *Serve a Smile* theme is *Making a Healthy Difference through Service*. It is our hope that through this grant program Minnesota's youth become involved in a public health issue, promoting or affecting change among a group of people through a service project. There are many ways to think about an issue that affects health or oral health. Before deciding on a health or oral health topic, consider talking with a local public health office about identifying a health issue that is facing your community. Please find some examples of possible projects. If you need help, please call me at 651-994-5312 or 1-800-325-1188 ext 5312.

Health Related Topics

- Write an editorial to your local newspaper on a health topic affecting your community and explore other ways to get your message out: Leaflets, neighborhood parks, grocery store bulletin boards, senior high rise buildings.
- Find out why exercise is so important for good health. Develop a brochure using existing materials and distribute to a group or population in your community.
- Host a Diabetes Education Dialogue or Lunch and Learn. Discuss the types of diabetes, why the increase in diabetes cases, complications, treatment options, signs and symptoms. Have both a pre and post-test to see if the seminar was effective.
- Go for a walk with a senior citizen in your community. Talk to them about good healthy habits. Ask them what they have done to keep them healthy over their lifetime and ask them what weren't such good habits.
- Sponsor a Community Dialogue on Healthy Living for Youth. Invite a speaker to present and conduct small groups to identify ways that each person can make a difference in their community /school.
- Offer a seminar on Cancer Prevention with discussion and presentation from a health professional.
- Deliver meals to homebound individuals or offer to pick up groceries with/for a senior citizen. Discuss or show educational materials about the importance of exercise and good nutrition.

Example of an Acceptable project: Host a forum for with health practitioners (Family practice, obstetrics and dental) to respond to questions in a community or school setting.

Example of a Good project: Host a CARDIO Cycle event. Individuals or teams can ride 4-10 miles on Global Youth Service Day (GYSD). At each mile marker have statistics that promote and encourage good cardio fitness. The project should promote community outreach, physical activity, and should be fun and educational. Post tests could be given at the end of the event to see if participant showed any progress.

Example of an Excellent project: Present education materials to Somali community groups (i.e.) and individual parents on cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Arrange for physicians to present on heart health including what cardiovascular disease and diabetes is, and why is it affecting the Somali population. Highlight the risk factors and what can be done to reduce the risk factors.

Oral Health Topics

- Partner with an Early Childhood Family Education /Head Start or other Children's Program to explain and demonstrate to parents and or children the importance of healthy oral habits. Bring a dental professional and oral health education materials, or read a story about oral health to the children. (Budget can include up to 2 hours of compensated dental professional time @ \$35 /hour).
- Sponsor an Oral Health Media event. Invite local media and dental professionals to talk about oral health habits for children/ elderly/ teens. Include special topic (i.e. Smiling and Your Oral Health, Pop and Sugar Snacks and your Oral Health).
- Host an Oral Health Fair: Invite local dental professionals set up stations describing different components of oral health: Brushing and Flossing, Healthy Snacks, Effects of Smoking on your Oral Health.
- Make "I Care" kits with combs, toothbrushes, shampoo, etc. for a homeless shelter. Include educational materials on the importance of good oral health.
- Visit an elderly high-rise or nursing home and discuss with residents the impact of healthy habits on oral health and the importance of good health.

Example of an Acceptable project: Sponsor an Oral Health Fair and include posters and display boards on good oral health habits for teens.

Example of a Good project: Hold an Oral health Fair and include educational brochures for children, adults and pregnant women. Have a dental health professional on site to respond to questions.

Example of an Excellent project: Sponsor an Oral Health Media event. Conduct an interview with a local dental health professional. Arrange for participants to call in or write in questions. Distribute a follow-up survey to see if the education and information had an impact.

In-kind Dental Health Donations

Delta Dental of Minnesota can make available several in-kind donations of oral health products in order to facilitate a service-learning project. These items can be requested in addition to your grant request. Delta Dental reserves the right to limit quantities.

- White plastic donation bags (9 x 12 inches)
- Toothbrushes. Please indicate number of child and adult brushes requested.
- Toothpaste. Please indicate either child or adult toothbrushes.
- Dental floss- generally floss is for children 8 years and older.
- Brochures: There are many oral health -related topics such as a Children's Dental Health brochure, Women's, Men, Teen and Older Adults Tip Sheet on the Delta Dental website at www.deltadentalmn.org . Feel free to print the PDF's for your use.

Nutrition Related Programs

- Help cook and/or serve a meal at a homeless shelter and demonstrate the importance of good nutrition with educational materials and or speakers.
- Sponsor a health fair and include topics for healthy living including exercise, good eating habits, and good oral health habits.
- Partner with Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) on an educational program directed for youth with the emphasis the importance of eating a healthy breakfast.
- Visit an elderly high-rise or nursing home and discuss with residents the importance of good nutrition.
- Host an open house offering free healthy recipes. Encourage participants to bring in healthy recipes to share. Using collected recipes make a Healthy Eating Cook Book or post the recipes on a website sponsored by one of your partners.

Example of an Acceptable project: Design and display in Community Center a poster on obesity that describes the health risks.

Example of a Good project: Conduct an educational program for young children on healthy eating for an Early Childhood and Family Education (ECFE) classroom. Following the presentation, have the children do their own poster or drawing about what they heard.

Example of an Excellent project: Develop a program with an ECFE classroom that involves both display boards, art projects on healthy eating and acting out skits. Present the skits for the parents of the children. Follow with a question and answer period.

Local Activities

- Organize and invite local police officers to present a drug awareness or bike safety assembly. Include topics on healthy living and safety precautions.
- Contact a school or city office and locate a student or family that needs help learning English or some other subject. Find out about health or oral health issues that affect their community. Find out if that oral health or health issue is common among other groups in your community.
- Contact your local League of Women Voters or voter registration office and find out about a health care issue. Write an editorial to a local newspaper on the topic encouraging people to take action.
- Sponsor an International Fair. Invite groups to present different health and holiday customs with in skits or display boards.
- Sponsor a child abuse prevention event. Discuss the prevalence in your community and why dental professionals are more likely to identify possible abuse. Invite dental professionals from your community to attend.

Special Needs

- Volunteer to help at a Special Olympics event and develop a fact sheet about persons with special needs and unique health issues they face.
- Identify a local health or oral health issue that concerns you. Find and contact someone in local government with your ideas on what to do about it.
- Organize a public issues forum on health topics that affect your neighborhood. Invite speakers and provide booths.

The Environment

- Create a campaign to encourage biking and walking including educational materials on why an exercise program is an important tool in healthy living. Promote the healthy use of a local, regional or state park.
- Test the health of the water in your local lakes, rivers, or streams. After making a determination, write an editorial for the local newspaper about the water quality in your community and steps to improve the quality.

Other Topics

- Feel free to explore other ideas related to health and oral health. Consult with your organization or contact Ann Rogers if you have any questions.