

# Innovations in Community-Focused Dental Care

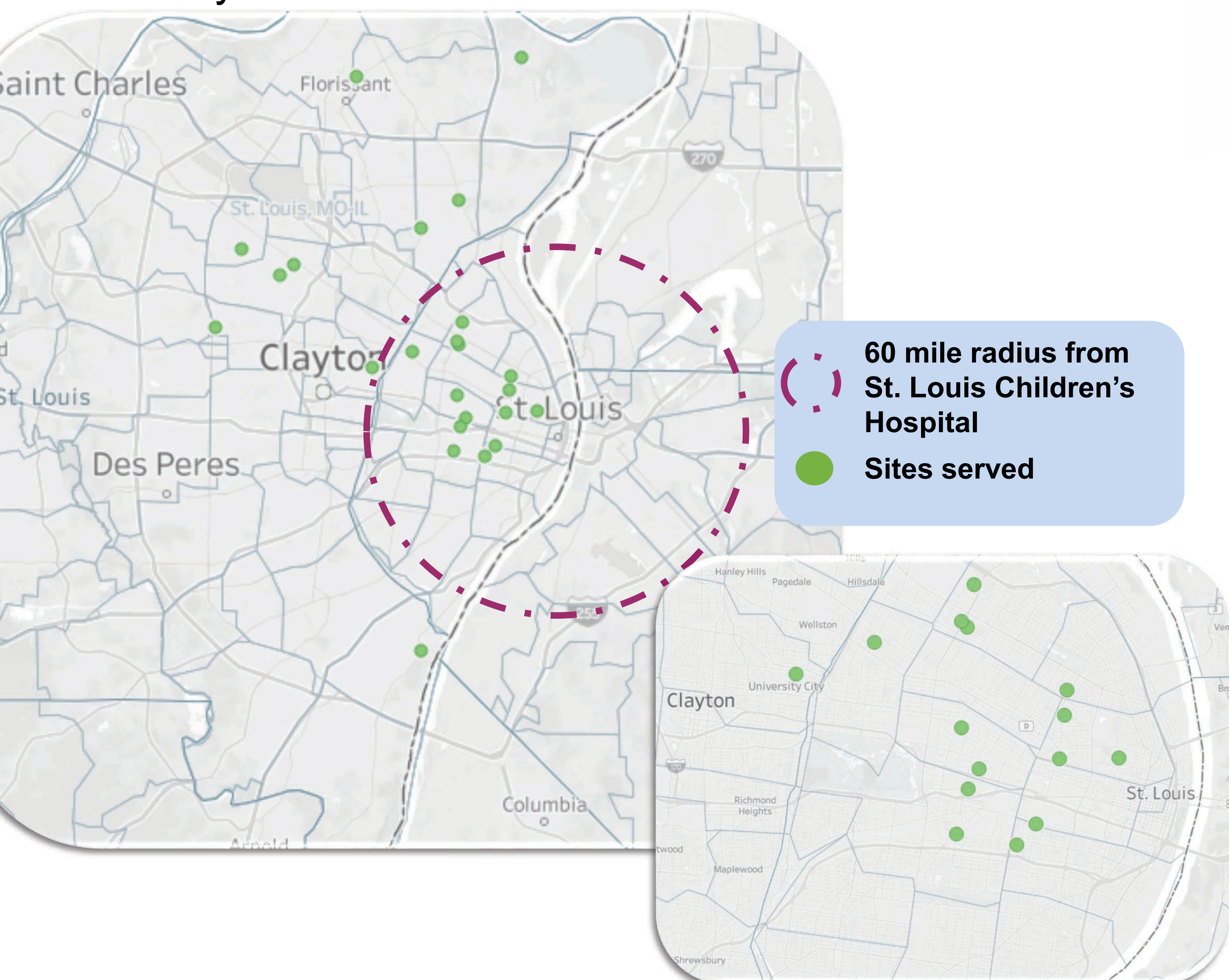
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## INTRODUCTION

- Tooth decay is one of the most common childhood diseases.
- Low-income children are twice as likely to have cavities as higher-income children.
- As of 2021, there were 2,471 dentists licensed in Missouri of which, in 2011, only 45 were enrolled as pediatric dentistry providers serving Medicaid children.<sup>1</sup>
- 40% of Medicaid-eligible children in the state do not have access to dental services<sup>2</sup>.

St. Louis Children's Hospital (SLCH) Healthy Kids Express Dental (HKED) mobile dental unit is the only local program providing dental care at no cost, dental exams, and most restorative procedures by a pedodontist and advanced-skilled staff in the St. Louis Community.

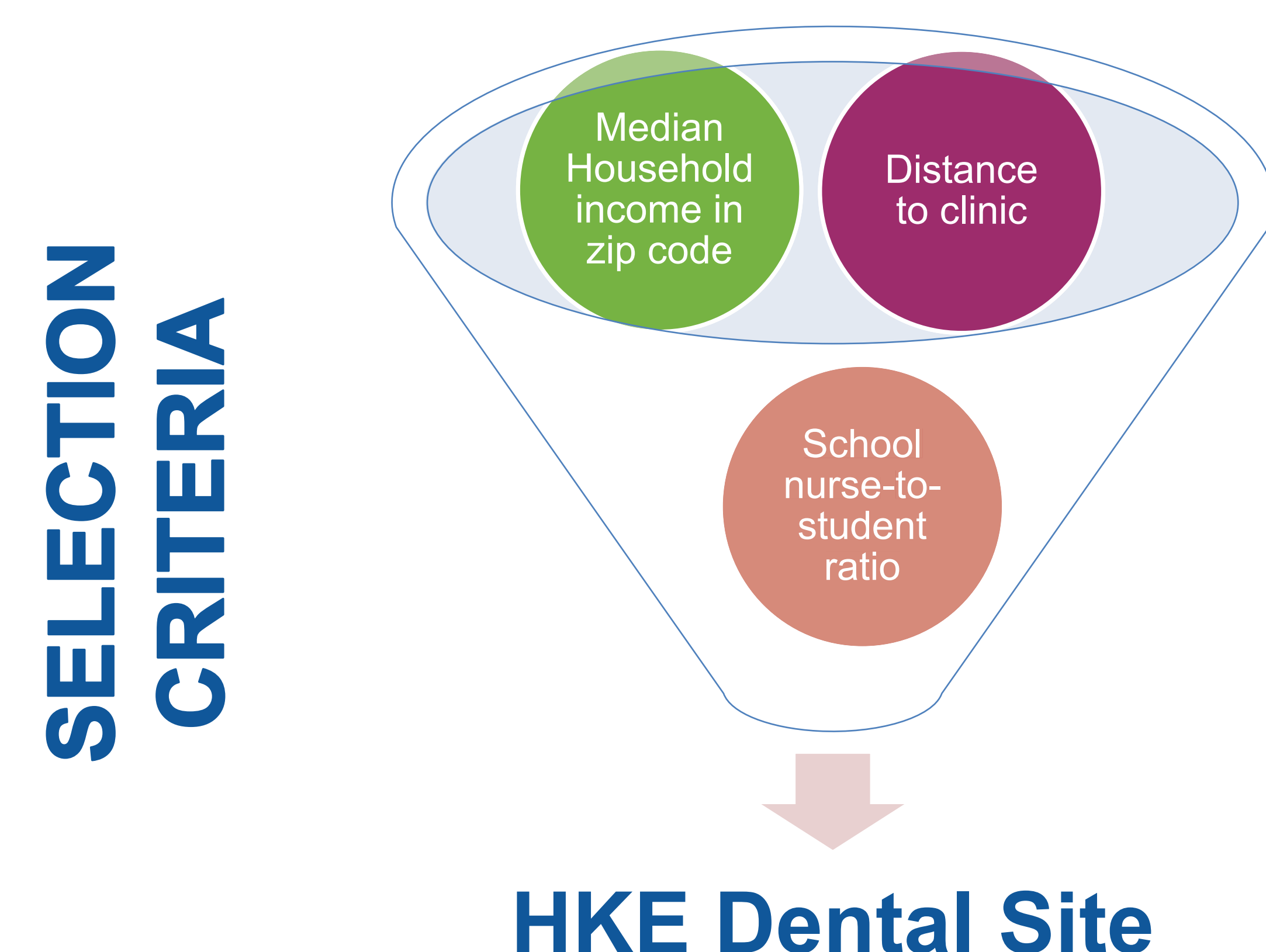


HKED addresses dental healthcare inaccessibility in vulnerable communities by:

- Offering mobile dental services at no cost
- Providing consented care without guardians present to reduce barriers to attending appointments
- Addressing underlying social determinants of health affecting the families of children seeking dental care

## METHODOLOGY

By partnering with schools and community organizations, HKE provides services in an environment that is familiar to the child. The program selects partner sites based on a variety of criteria.



Currently, the program's three operatories provide full-service dental care to ages 3 - 21.



Dental Services	SLCH HKE Dental
Dental Exams	X
Cleanings	X
Filings	X
X-Rays	X
Baby Root Canal	X
Stainless Steel Crowns	X
Silver Diamine Fluoride	X

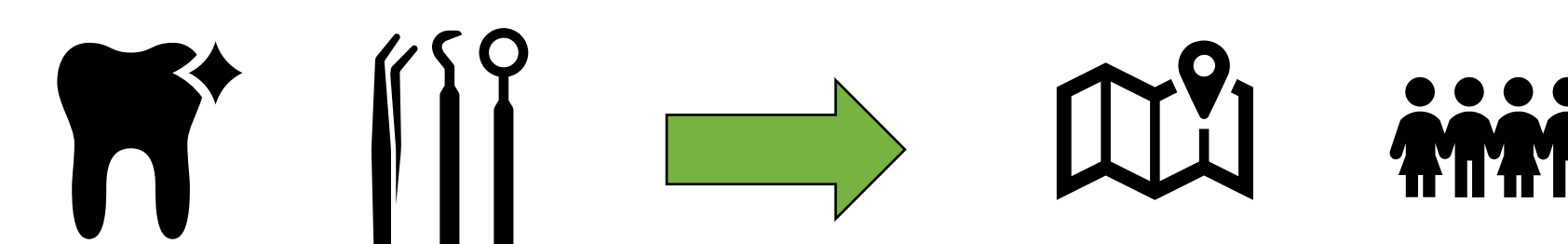
In considering the effectiveness of the program, we gather data on the number of children served, dental procedures administered and improved oral hygiene knowledge.

## EVALUATION PROCESS

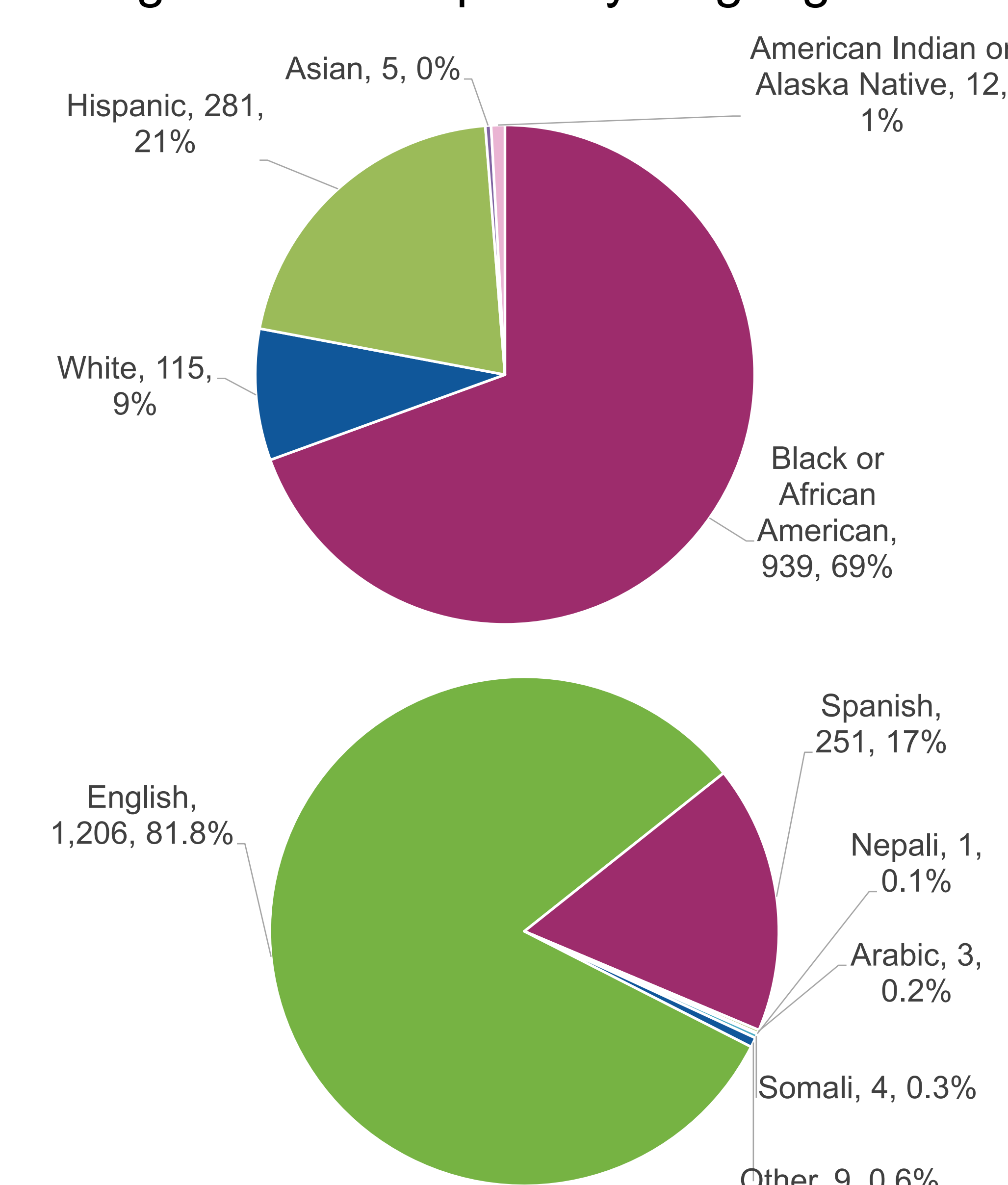


## RESULTS

In 2023, HKED partnered with 29 unique community partners to deliver 177 dental visits.



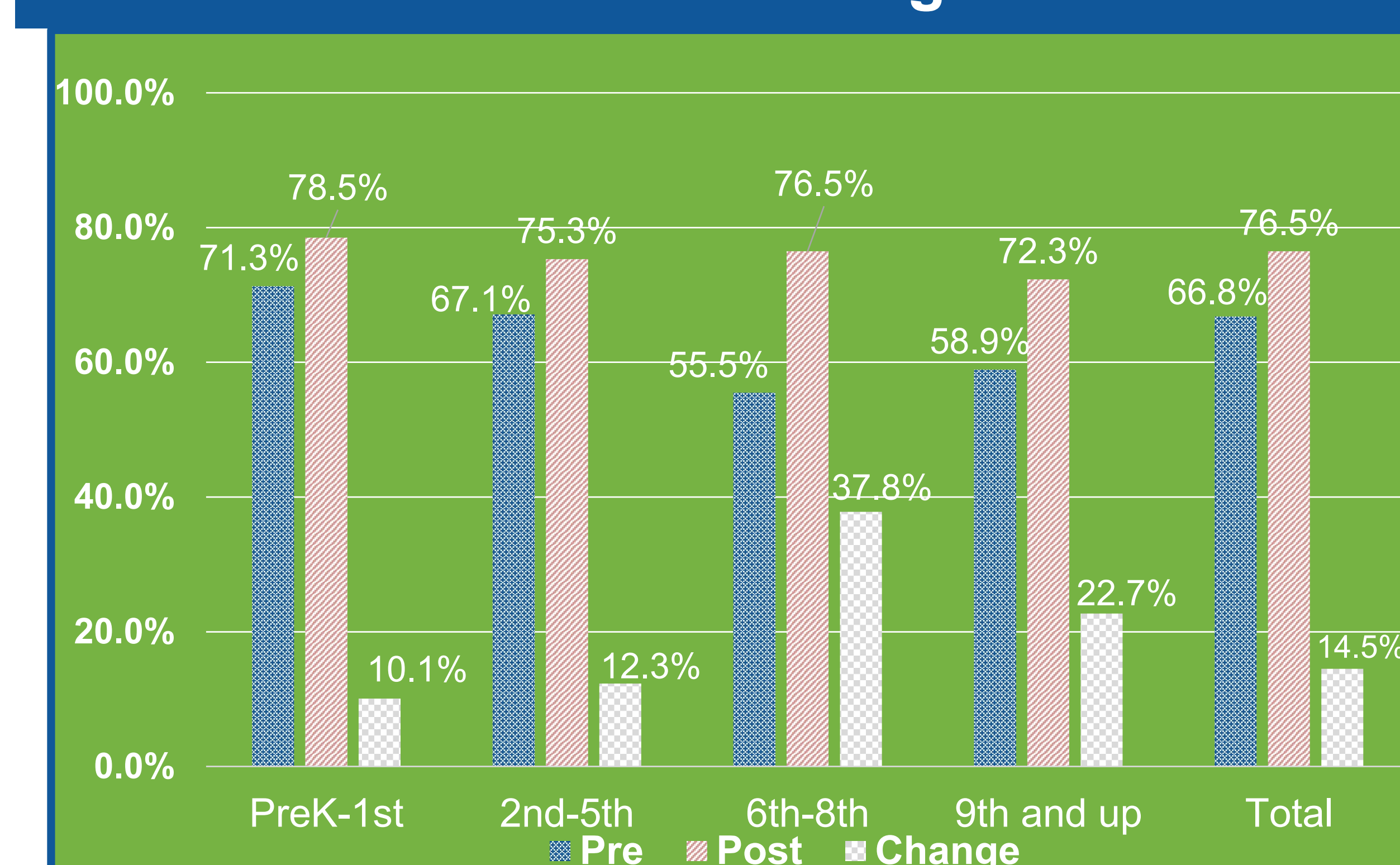
In 2023, HKED served 5 different ethnic groups speaking 6+ different primary languages.



In 2023, HKED set goals for dental screening follow-up, dental knowledge, and dental exams.

Goal	Progress	Status	Comments
Ensure 70% of children who failed dental screenings received follow-up care within one year.	97% of children who failed dental screenings received follow-up care within one year.	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Goal surpassed
Increase patient dental knowledge of proper dental hygiene by 8%.	Patient knowledge increasing an average of 14.5%.	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Goal surpassed
Provide 1,800 dental exams.	1,461 dental exams provided	Not achieved	81.2% to goal

## 2023 Dental Knowledge Score Change



"I would love to thank Dr. Moody for the knowledge, patience, and care she gave to my children as they came to their dentist appointment. She's really awesome!"

## TESTIMONIAL

This was my sons' first dental visit. They made them comfortable and engaged in all the questions the kids had. My oldest son wanted to bring his dental floss to school. (I need to make sure I get the food out of my teeth because that's what Dr. Moody said I need to do). They also loved the little timer that were in their goody bags. Dr. Moody and Mrs. Molly continue to do what you're doing. We will see you in six months. Thanks again."

- Parent of HKE Dental Participant



## CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

As low income and Medicaid-eligible children in the St. Louis area struggle with receiving dental treatment, St. Louis Children's mobile dental unit hopes to provide care to a larger population by expanding services offered and increasing its restorative service capabilities:

Program Component	Current	Expansion (Over the Next 5 years)
Dental Exams	1,800 annually	<b>3,500 annually</b>
Dental Vans	Two Vans	<b>Three vans</b>
Mild Sedation Restorative Care Offerings	Referral to Provider	<b>Mobile sedation unit (low-level sedation)</b>

### Lessons Learned:

- Partnering sites that provide year - round service should be prioritized to receive dental care during the summer months.
- English as Second Language (ESL) sites had lower restorative compliance rates, therefore same day cleaning and restorative care provided.

## CITATIONS

- 1 - Dental Action Plan Template For Medicaid and CHIP Programs, retrieved 2021 from <https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/sohap-missouri.pdf>
- 2 - Missouri Kids Count, Retrieved 2022 from <https://mokitcount.org/stories/oral-health-among-missouris-kids/>