



Children's
FRIEND



**2019 – 2020
DENTAL PROGRAM
ANNUAL REPORT**





Dear Friends,

We present the 2019-2020 Annual Report of the Children's Friend Dental Program with great joy. It seems hard to believe that we are celebrating our seventh year of a wonderful partnership with the Samuels Sinclair Dental Center at Rhode Island Hospital.

Of course, the success we have achieved over these years would not be possible without the outstanding leadership of all those who make this comprehensive dental program a reality. In particular, I would like to thank the Samuels Sinclair Dental Team, our Board of Directors, our talented teaching and nursing staff along with Maria Chionchio, our Nurse-Family Partnership Manager, and our President and Chief Executive Officer, David Caprio, for their dedicated efforts to ensure children in the classrooms are receiving the necessary care to ensure good oral health.

This year, we are incredibly proud to report the continued upward trend in the number of families who have embraced the importance of having a dental home. Over 95 percent of families have a dental home, and with increased knowledge about good oral health care, many have chosen to secure dental services from a private dentist.

Our innovative Sealant Project continues to be a beneficial service in helping to prevent tooth decay. With many of our families unable to afford a cost of \$150 per application, we are thrilled to continue to provide this service to our families enrolled in Children's Friend programs.

Without a doubt, this past year has undoubtedly been challenging with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even during these unprecedented times, we are proud of our dental program's success this year. Please be assured that the Samuels Sinclair Dental Center and Children's Friend are committed to our partnership in providing the best dental care possible. In doing so, we take every safety precaution and strictly adhere to guidelines mandated by the Rhode Island Department of Health and the Department of Human Services.

I hope you enjoy reading the report that follows, which highlights some of our accomplishments for the 2019-2020 year. We anticipate many more successes in the coming years.

Sincerely,

Dana Mullen

Dana Mullen
Chief of Programs
Children's Friend

A Comprehensive Dental Program – A Wonderful Partnership

We all know that teaching children at an early age about the importance of good oral hygiene is vital in promoting healthy teeth throughout their lives. Children who practice good dental habits such as brushing twice a day, flossing between teeth daily, and limiting sugary beverages and snacks will have less chance of developing problems later in life such as plaque, gum disease, and cavities.

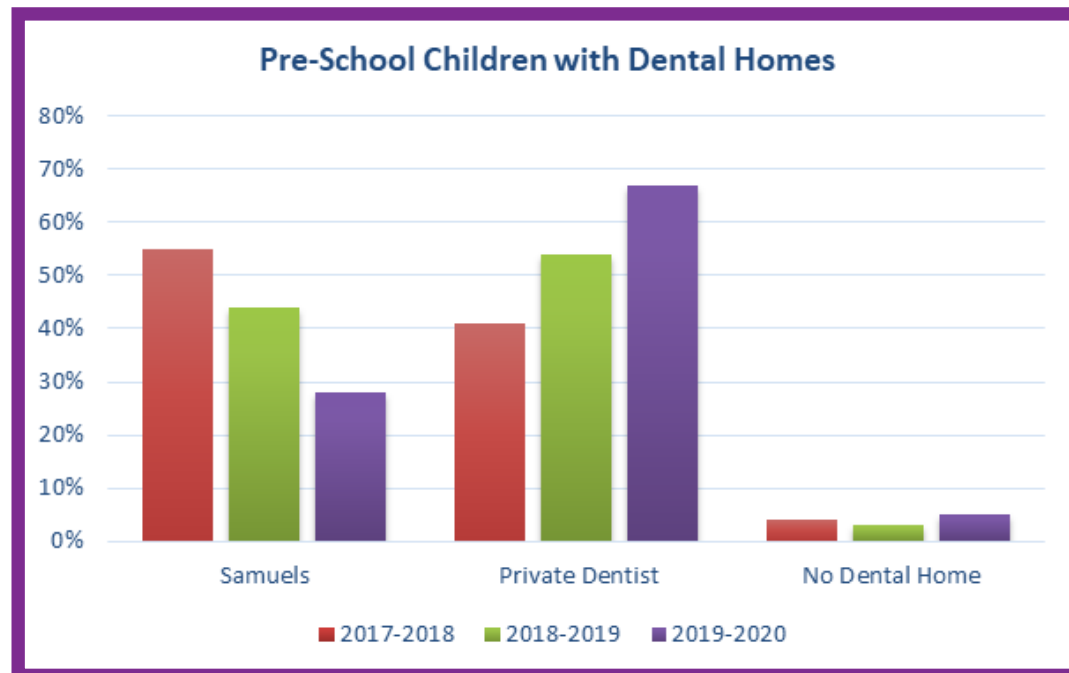
Educating young children about the importance of good oral hygiene is essential in Children's Friend's curriculum. Through our partnership with Samuels Sinclair, Children's Friend continues to ensure that children receive the critical dental care that is so important for our overall good health.

One way Children's Friend promotes good oral health is the continuation of our Dental Sealant Project. Children in Early Head Start, Pre-K, and Head Start classrooms are screened for sealants. Dental sealants, applied by a licensed dentist, form a protective barrier that helps prevent bacteria from developing, which causes cavities.

Our Dental Team, comprised of two health managers and two bilingual health project coordinators, promotes awareness regarding dental sealants' benefits. The Nurse-Family Partnership Manager at Children's Friend, Maria Chionchio, RN, BSN, continually focuses her efforts to ensure that the number of children who have access to a licensed dentist increases each year.

Our partnership with Samuels Sinclair continues to raise awareness of how critical it is to have a licensed dentist's dental care in a comprehensive, accessible, coordinated, and family-centered manner.

A successful, positive upward trend over the past three years within our dental program indicates that more families now make dental arrangements with a private dentist. We also see a low percentage of families with no dental home. Please refer to the bar graph below.



Key Accomplishments and Continued Progress

Through our successful collaboration with Samuels Sinclair Dental Center, Children's Friend continues to provide an outstanding dental program that identifies with our mission to improve Rhode Island's most vulnerable young children's well-being and healthy development. The statistics that follow prove just how successful this partnership is in delivering excellent dental services for children enrolled in our classrooms.

- **326** children were seen by Samuels Sinclair during this period.
- **73** Early Head Start children were seen at our partnership sites.
- **172** children received a cleaning and fluoride treatment from a dental hygienist.
- **87** three-year-old Head Start children were seen by Samuels Sinclair.
- **8** Early Head Start children were seen by Samuels Sinclair.
- **797** Head Start children have a dental home, with **242** using Samuels Sinclair and **555** using another dental home.
- All of our children were screened for eligibility to receive dental sealants. Of those examined, **5** children received a dental sealant.
- Wednesdays continued to be designated as a "Dental Hygiene Day" at Children's Friend.
- Throughout February, teachers, and nurses provided dental education to students, along with instructive classroom activities. An informative newsletter, toothbrushes, and toothpaste were distributed to children to take home.



From The Good News File

Dr. George at Samuels Sinclair Dental Center was able to examine the teeth of a child who had previously been terrified of dentists. Having the exam right in his classroom with his peers put him at ease enough to open his mouth for the exam.

His mom stated, "I had never been able to convince him to cooperate with a dentist, and therefore, he had not had an exam for over two years. Thank you, Children's Friend!"



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