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PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pinellas County Health Department Awarded Grant for Reducing Disparities in Children's Dental Care - The "TEETH" Program

The **Pinellas County Health Department** was recently awarded a **\$150,000 grant** from Florida's Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities: Closing the Gap program.

Managed jointly by the Pinellas County Health Department's Division of Dental Health (DH) and Office of Minority Health (OMH), the grant program, "**T**eaching **E**veryone the **E**lements for **T**eeth to be **H**ealthy" (**TEETH**), will provide treatment and education to residents of the Front Porch community of St. Petersburg. Designed by the Pinellas County Health Department to decrease racial and ethnic disparities in Pinellas County oral health care, TEETH will provide dental screening, sealant and varnish to 300 eligible children and oral health care information to diabetics of all ages through June of this year.

The program features intensive recruitment of eligible children, who are transported by the TEETH program to the Pinellas County Health Department's Dental Clinic – on certain evenings and Saturdays – where they are entertained, screened, sealed and varnished, then taken back home. Children who are on Medicaid or who are otherwise ineligible for TEETH are referred to providers who will treat them. Children who are found to have other dental issues during screening, are referred back to the health department's dental clinic for treatment during normal office hours.

The program features an ambitious education component, which includes distribution of a keepsake oral health information placard (and other education /information items) to each household in the six-neighborhood Front Porch target area (Over 3,200 households). TEETH's program coordinator is Dr. Marva Hutchinson-Dennard from Bishop Academy, under the supervision of Dr. Carrie Nero (OMH) and Dr. Haychell Saraydar (DH). Bishop Academy, with guidance and assistance from the health department, will apply for a continuation grant to keep the program going another three years beyond June.

For more information, call (727) 824-6900, extension 11190.

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The mission of the Pinellas County Health Department is to promote, protect and improve the health and safety of residents and visitors through public and private community efforts.
www.PinellasHealth.com