Dentistry Participates in Annual Safe Crib Distribution

Even though cribs are a necessity for infants and toddlers, good, safe, affordable cribs can be very hard to come by for needy families.

Eastman Institute for Oral Health social work, pediatric and general dentistry staff recently participated at a local event to help address that problem. Seventy-five cribs, mattresses and crib sheets were given to pre-screened families through participation in prenatal and parenting outreach programs. During the annual Safe Crib and Car Seat Project distribution, pregnant women were given the opportunity to learn about child safety and other issues including oral health and breast feeding.

The Safe Crib and Car Seat Project (SCCSP) is one of only two groups in the country dedicated to giving safe cribs and car seats to needy families. In just two hours, SCCSP gave away 75 cribs, mattresses and crib sheets to pre-screened families through participating outreach programs.

Social Worker Lenora A. Colaruotolo, Social Work intern Carly Kalavrouziotis, pediatric dentistry residents Drs. Karine Nadeau and Cynthia Wong, and general dentistry resident Dr. Javier Cortex were available to help these soon-to-be moms understand the critical importance of good oral health for themselves and their babies.

Along with providing hygiene products, educational materials, and referral information for families without a dental home, Eastman Institute for Oral Health professionals counseled the women on how brushing, flossing, eating healthy foods, and getting dental checkups and treatment will help keep them and their baby healthy. They also learned how they can best take care of their baby's gums and teeth, along with giving their baby healthy foods, and taking their baby to the dentist by his or her first birthday.

"Families were engaged, appreciative, and asked good questions," Colaruotolo said, "they have a sincere interest in giving their children the best possible start in life and a healthy smile."

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