

Eastman Institute for Oral Health Social Work and Dentistry Make Learning Fun for High-Risk Kids

Young children living in poverty have significant unmet dental needs and often have reduced quality of life as a result of severe early childhood caries. Untreated dental disease remains a sustained, unmet health need for many children living in the city of Rochester. The Eastman Institute for Oral Health (EIOH) team continues to make a difference one child at a time to reverse this trend.



The Monroe County Children's Center—a short-term, drop-off childcare facility at the Monroe County Hall of Justice sponsored Dental Health Week during the Rochester City School District winter recess. The Center is designed to provide a free, safe-haven for young children while their parents are in court for a variety of reasons, including orders of protection for domestic violence, custody, child support, maltreatment, substance use, and juvenile delinquency. In addition, it also provides a setting in which children and families at-risk for poor outcomes are linked to needed services.

“Given the high-risk population served by the Center, Eastman Dental was pleased to participate in Dental Health Week,” said Lenora Colaruotolo, EIOH social worker. “We provided oral health screenings, education and guidance, and gave away hygiene items and brochures.”

“The children had fun coloring pictures related to good hygiene and were pleased to see their artwork hung on a bulletin board for all to view,” she added. “It was a great opportunity to discuss the importance of children's oral health with parents when they returned from their court appearance, and to offer referral information to a dental home.”



“Thanks to Dr. Lindsey Batiste, Health Project Counselor Elise-Linke-Judge and MSW intern Shannon Congdon, we successfully served many vulnerable families,” Colaruotolo added.