The Smile Share Program: Oral Health Education for the Community
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Mission Statement: Provide community educational outreach programs because oral health education is the best way to prevent dental diseases that affect all age groups.

Significance
A significant proportion of the population, including children and adults, experiences preventable tooth decay and periodontal disease. One tool in the prevention of these diseases is oral health education. Some segments of the population have limited or no access to oral health education and have a disproportionate amount of dental disease. The Smile Share Program was developed to address this disparity and bring oral health information and preventive services to underserved and marginalized groups within the Bay Area.

History
The Smile Share Program was developed in Fall 2008 by Patti Chan, M.S., a community dental health instructor in the Foothill College Dental Hygiene Program. During the first year, she and her second year dental hygiene students participated in three elementary school dental screenings. Since that first year, the program has expanded to include target groups around the Bay from Gilroy to San Francisco.

This year we visited the following groups:
- 15 elementary school classrooms from grades Jr-K through 8th grade
- 17 special education classrooms, including children with developmental, orthopedic, and hearing challenges
- 4 senior center events
- 2 classrooms with parents and their pre-school children

What We Do as Smile Share Ambassadors
- Interactive presentations about oral health for:
  - Pre-school and school-aged children
  - Special needs students (Autism, Hearing-impaired)
  - Seniors
- Discussion of oral health topics
  - Bacterial plaque and dental diseases
  - Brushing and flossing demonstrations
  - Nutritional counseling
  - Promoting quality and routine oral health practices
- Preventive services
  - Dental caries screening
  - Fluoride varnish
  - Oral cancer screening
- Assessment of community knowledge through surveys

Services Provided in the Smile Share Program (2017-2018)
- Oral Health Education
- Oral Health Demonstration
- Fluoride Varnish
- Dental Screenings
- Oral Cancer Screenings

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References