

Creating Bright Smiles

by Megha Sata, DDS, Dental Director, South Bay Children's Health Center

Our first year is coming to a close with WLADS's new volunteer community outreach program "Creating Bright Smiles." The SBCHC, Dr Megha Sata and WLADS have been working hard to coordinate care for children who might not otherwise get tooth saving treatment. You can imagine it isn't easy losing permanent teeth in your teens. SBCHC has also recently included providing care to women enrolled in the Options for Recovery program.

Since it's inception in 1990, Options for Recovery/Stork Club has been in the business of helping women recover from alcohol and drug abuse.

As a part of our commitment to support SBCHC, we have expanded our care to adults in this program. This year I had the fortunate opportunity treat Amber in her road to recovery. Here is her story:

The Amber Choate Story:

How one phone call can change a life

My name is Amber Choate and I am a 27 year old mother of three. I am also an addict. I started my journey going to detox back in July of 2010. After detox, I transferred to an inpatient facility. I was there for 3 ½ months. I decided to leave there and go to an outpatient treatment program called Options for Recovery. I have been here since October 2010. One morning, I woke up with a really bad toothache. I went to treatment and told the Director that I was in severe pain. She told me to hold on while she made a few phone calls in hopes of getting me help. I had no insurance and I thought my only option was to ask my Aunt for money to see what was wrong. I knew that whatever my Aunt gave me would not cover all the work I needed.

I contacted an old Dentist and made an appointment to be seen. After I arrived at that appointment the Director called me and said I needed to call Tina Harris the Director of SBCHC Dental Clinic as soon as possible. I contacted her and through their program, I have been able to receive free dental care.

Due to my drug use, my teeth were neglected. The last time I had been to the Dentist prior to my treatment at SBCHC was about 5 years ago. During my first visit with Dr. Sata I learned that I needed extensive dental work. At that first visit, I was very nervous and scared. Dr. Sata and her team welcomed me with

open arms. They all made me feel comfortable and explained everything to me while they did what needed to be done. It was a very comforting experience for me. Working with Dr. Sata, I was fortunate enough to meet Dr. Westernoff who committed to meet with me and provide my services free of charge.

I am a mother who has a history of substance abuse and I have had lots of trauma in my life. To be given the opportunity to change some of the physical ramifications of my past is a blessing. Even the beginning stages of my dental work have improved my confidence as well as my self esteem.

Taking care of myself physically and mentally is an important part of motherhood. I recognize that fixing some of my physical attributes will have a major impact on my future. I plan to always stay abreast of my dental needs. I am no longer stuck in addiction and I am responsible for my life today. The support I received here will not be forgotten. I am extremely grateful and appreciative to South Bay Children's Health Center Dental Clinic and their team as well as Dr. Westernoff and his team.

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