

# DENTAL PROGRAM



2023 - 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



children's friend  
Nurturing Children. Empowering Families.

## Presenting the 2023-2024 Annual Dental Program Report

Dear Friend,

Good oral health is essential for the healthy development of Rhode Island's young children. Our continued collaboration with Samuels Sinclair Dental Center (Samuels) at Rhode Island Hospital is one of the ways we ensure a healthy start for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers at Children's Friend.

According to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, children living in poverty are twice as likely to suffer from tooth decay, and their dental diseases are more than twice as likely to go untreated compared to their more affluent peers. Yet, regular dental care sets children up for positive health outcomes throughout their lives.

Over 90% of the families we serve at Children's Friend live at or below the federal poverty level. By working with Samuels to make comprehensive dental care accessible to children, we are directly addressing disparities so that all children have the opportunity for a healthy future. Our partnership with Samuels also allows us to educate families about the importance of coordinated family dental care, which contributes to a lifetime of good oral health outcomes for both children and their caregivers.

We are thrilled to report that more of our families are making dental arrangements with private dentists each year, and most of our families have established a permanent dental home.

We extend a heartfelt thank-you to those who make the comprehensive Dental Program at Children's Friend a reality, including Samuels, the Children's Friend Policy Council and Board of Directors, and our talented team of Health Project Coordinators, Teachers, and Nurses. Thank you for making early oral health a priority for children.

Sincerely,



**Lindsey Brannon**

Health and Nursing Manager  
Children's Friend



# MEET OUR AMAZING NURSING TEAM

## **Friendship Center**

Lindsey Brannon

## **King and Hartford Center**

Donna Hulstyn

## **Althea, Dorcas, McAuley, and Partnership Sites**

Katy Killilea

## **Berkshire and Kizirian Center**

Peggy King

## **Heritage Park and Dean Center**

Ariana Aracena

## **Early Head Start, Dexter, and Carter Center**

Brittany Pratt



# KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Early Head Start

- 6 children received a dental assessment
- 4 children received a hygiene/fluoride treatment



## Head Start

- 131 children received a dental assessment
- 82 children received a hygiene/fluoride treatment

## Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships

- 23 children received a dental assessment
- 13 children received a hygiene/fluoride treatment



# FROM THE GOOD NEWS FILE



This year, Samuels Sinclair Dental visited our sites and provided assessments and hygiene/fluoride treatments on the same day, rather than splitting them over multiple visits.

We found this method to be easier for staff and children and more successful overall. We plan to continue conducting dental visits this way.