

Teddy Bear Clinics 2009



Kaiser Permanente Community Benefit Programs

What is a Teddy Bear Clinic?

The Teddy Bear Clinic (TBC) is offered by Kaiser Permanente San Jose in areas of high need in the community in order to introduce children and their families to healthcare professionals and basic wellness messages. As part of the TBC, children are provided with a free bear and parents are given information about children's health insurance enrollment. In the course of giving the bear a 'check up,' clinicians deliver core messages about diet, exercise, safety, avoiding smoking, drugs and alcohol, and limiting TV and other 'screen time' to children and their parents.

How does it work?

The Teddy Bear Clinic follows the model of a traditional clinic visit including a reception area and a visit with a healthcare professional. Non-clinical volunteers greet families and engage kids in a hand washing activity while they wait to see the healthcare professional. Once they meet their provider they are given their bear. With the child's help, the health care professional gives the bear a "wellness check" and discusses the best way to keep the bear healthy. Health care providers spend approximately 3-5 minutes with each child and their family. Whenever possible, volunteer translators who speak Spanish, Vietnamese and other languages are available so children and parents can interact in the language they feel most comfortable speaking.

Who can volunteer at the KP San Jose Teddy Bear Clinic?

The Teddy Bear Clinic was developed as a volunteer experience for clinicians and employees to reach out to vulnerable populations to improve access to care and coverage. With this in mind, there are a series of roles that engage both clinicians and non-clinicians in a meaningful volunteer experience. These roles include Teddy Bear Clinician, Hand Washer, Greeter, and Translator. The average Teddy Bear Clinic engages approximately 20 volunteers and serves 500-600 children and their families. If you would like to view TBC volunteers in action, pick up a copy of a short video about the KP San Jose TBC in the Public Affairs office, KP San Jose, MOB, Suite 825.

What is the criteria for selecting venues for the Teddy Bear Clinic?

Requests for the KPSJ Teddy Bear Clinic are reviewed using the following criteria. The events must be free and open to the public; target underserved populations; hosted by a non-profit organization; family focused with a projected attendance of over 2,000 participants; agencies offering enrollment assistance information for subsidized children's health insurance must be present; and promotion for the event in multiple languages is strongly recommended.

For more information, please contact Elizabeth Sills, Community Benefit Manager at (408) 972- 6877 / elizabeth.sills@kp.org or Judy Lloyd, Associate Community Benefit Specialist at (408) 362- 3674/ judy.lloyd@kp.org