

A 4-year-old boy whose front teeth couldn't grow in place because he had extra teeth beneath his gums.

A 7-year-old girl who was thrilled to get a toothbrush kit and asked for toothbrushes for her family because they didn't have a lot of money.

A teenage girl with special needs whose face was swollen because she needed three teeth removed.

These are just a few examples of the positive impact Sarah Bush Lincoln is having on so many young lives with its mobile dental unit and now a dental office.

With dental health an important component of overall health, the Mattoon hospital has taken on the task of improving access to dental services in rural East Central Illinois. The hospital's SBL Dental Services fills a big gap in the community by providing care for uninsured and underinsured children.

SBL Dental Services provides dental education, exams and services at no cost for families who can't afford care. First, it was through a mobile dental health unit. Now, it's the mobile unit and new office site.

Dental staff have seen a significant increase in patients under age 5. Because these young children have many dental issues, the staff now stock toddler brush kits in addition to their standard toothbrush kits.

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