

# *tEEEth talk* Community Oral Health Education Workshops: a service-learning opportunity for preclinical training



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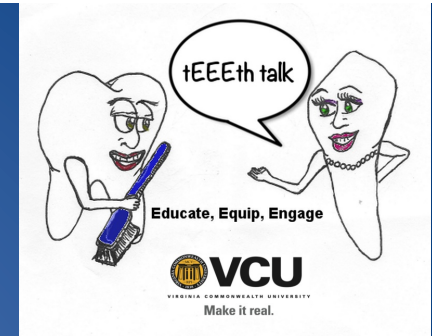
Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry

Richmond, VA

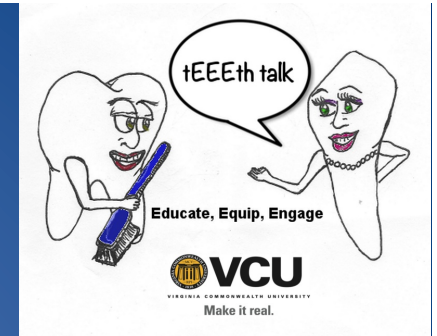
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# Overview

- Introduction
  - what is Service Learning (SL)?
  - traditional models and challenges of dental curricula
  - benefits of SL in pre-clinical years
- Program overview
  - *tEEEth talk* establishment
  - lessons learned
- Discussion
  - sustaining student-led initiatives
  - hidden curriculum

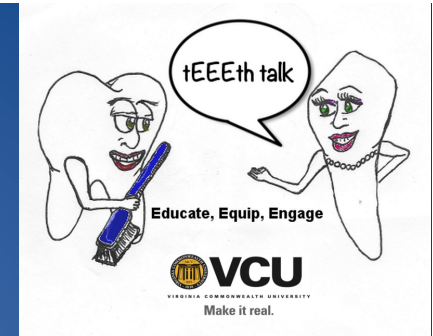
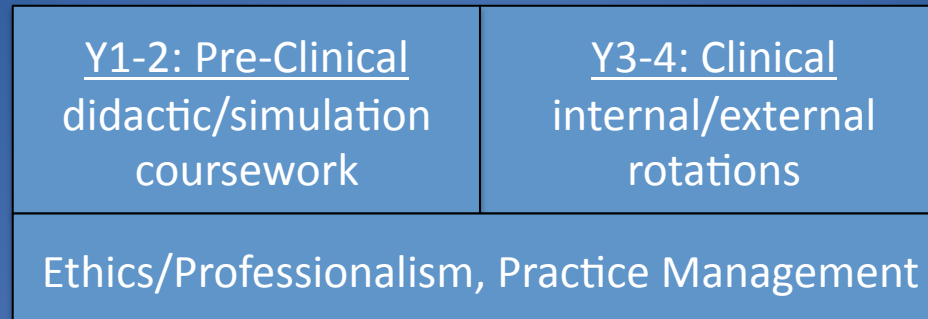


# Service Learning



Service-learning at VCU is a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets community-identified needs. Students reflect on the service activity to increase understanding and application of course content and to enhance a sense of civic responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

# Dental curricula



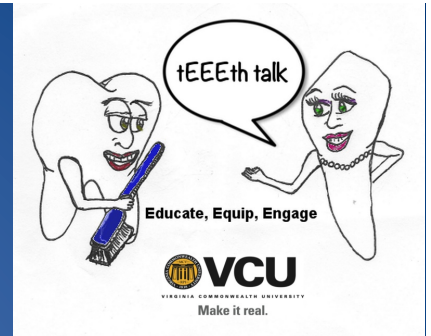
TOTAL	17,349	17,487	17,657	17,978	18,315	18,610	19,038	19,342	19,702	20,052
NUMBER OF REPEATING STUDENTS <sup>3</sup>	189	192	197	172	243	203	156	166	228	234

**Table 21: United States Dental School Attrition by Class, 1999-2000 to 2008-09<sup>2</sup>**

YEAR	FIRST-YEAR ENROLLMENT	1 <sup>ST</sup> ACADEMIC YEAR REASON FOR ATTRITION			ATTRITION BY ACADEMIC YEAR			TOTAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL ATTRITION
		NON-ACADEMIC	ACADEMIC	TOTAL	2 <sup>ND</sup> YEAR	3 <sup>RD</sup> YEAR	4 <sup>TH</sup> YEAR		
1999-2000	4,314	2.2	1.7	4.0	1.5	0.9	0.4	17,242	1.7
2000-01	4,327	1.8	1.2	3.0	1.5	1.0	0.3	17,349	1.4
2001-02	4,407	1.2	1.6	2.8	1.7	0.6	0.2	17,487	1.3
2002-03	4,448	0.9	1.5	2.4	1.5	0.8	0.3	17,657	1.2
2003-04	4,618	1.0	1.7	2.7	1.7	0.8	0.2	17,978	1.4
2004-05	4,612	1.0	1.6	2.6	1.7	0.8	0.4	18,315	1.4
2005-06	4,688	0.8	1.4	2.2	1.0	0.9	0.4	18,610	1.1
2006-07	4,733	1.2	1.0	2.2	1.1	0.6	0.1	19,038	1.0
2007-08	4,770	1.1	1.1	2.2	1.1	0.5	0.3	19,342	1.0
2008-09	4,918	1.0	0.7	1.7	1.3	0.7	0.3	19,702	1.0

Source: American Dental Association, Survey Center, *Surveys of Dental Education*. (Group II, Question 10.)

# Benefits of SL



“Students participating in SL programs demonstrated significant gains in five outcome areas: attitudes toward self, attitudes toward school and learning, civic engagement, social skills, and academic performance.”<sup>3</sup>  
(62 studies, 11,837 students)

“Although SL students and non-SL students had similar pre-college academic characteristics, SL students were more successful while enrolled in college. They earned more credits, had a higher average college GPA, and they graduated at a significantly higher rate than did non-SL students.”<sup>4</sup>

# Launching the Initiative

- A consultation agreement was formed between the Richmond City Council of the Parent Teacher Association and VCU DDS Class of 2016.



## Richmond City Council of Parent Teacher Association

### CONSULTATION AGREEMENT

This agreement is executed by and between the Virginia Commonwealth University Dental School (DDS) Class of 2016 and the Richmond City Council of the Parent Teacher Association (RCCPTA) in Virginia (PTA).

#### WITNESSETH:

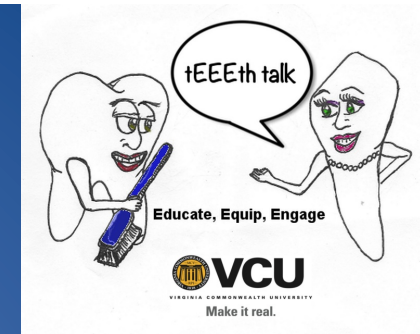
WHEREAS, Richmond City Council of PTA has made a "commitment to improving the education, health, and safety of all children. [They] speak with one voice for every child" (vapta.org) and seek community partners with whom to realize these goals.

WHEREAS, the VCU DDS Class of 2016 (the consultant) has the ability to provide such an oral health partnership.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is agreed by and between the partners hereto as follows:

1. Identifying themselves as the *tEEEth talk* group, VCU DDS Class of 2016 students will provide dental health **education** to individuals attending local units' PTA meetings or events. The type and time of such consultations shall be determined by the mutual consent of the local unit of PTA and VCU DDS Class of 2016.
2. At the ability to receive donations from dental supplier companies and/or a grant for purchasing outreach supplies, the VCU DDS Class of 2016 will **equip** students that belong to the local PTA unit with tooth brushes, paste, paste, and/or other hygiene supplies. The mode and extent of distribution of these supplies will be determined by mutual consent of the school administrators/faculty and the VCU DDS Class of 2016.
3. By providing written/oral information about local oral health care services, the VCU DDS Class of 2016 will strive to **engage** individuals associated with local PTA units (parents, children and teachers) in accessing community oral health care resources.
4. The local PTA units agree to inform the consultant at least 24 hours in advance of cancellation of a scheduled meeting/event. The consultant agrees to inform local PTA units of the same.
5. The RCCPTA and local units grant permission for the consultant to disclose to others that the VCU DDS Class of 2016 is providing this consultation service to the RCCPTA.
6. This Agreement shall be in effect August 1, 2013 to May 1, 2016. This agreement is subject to modification by mutual consent of both parties, or to cancellation by either party, subject to a 30-day notification.

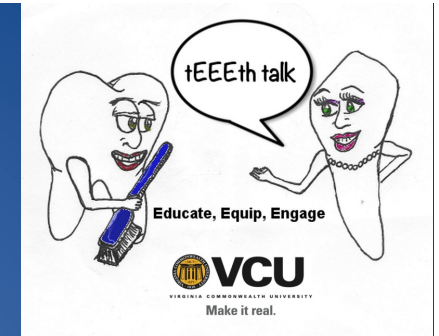
# Workshop Settings



- Elementary school-wide assembly in a disadvantaged region of Richmond
  - Drama for caries progression, oral hygiene instructions, nutritional counseling, common dental procedures (sealants, prophylaxis, restorations)
    - Donated oral hygiene supplies
    - List of local safety net providers sent home to parents



# Workshop Settings

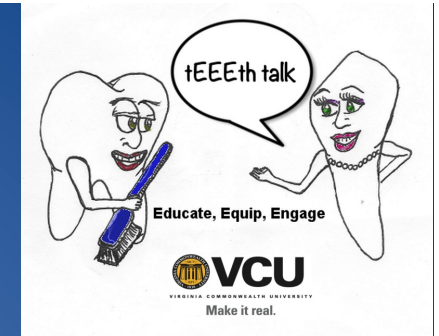


- Evening session at local Recreational Center
  - Educate, Equip, Engage series
  - Emphasis on oral-systemic health connections (diabetes, heart health)





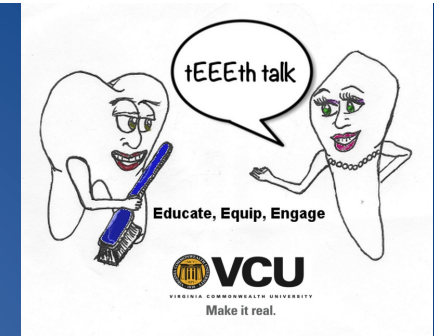
# Workshop Settings



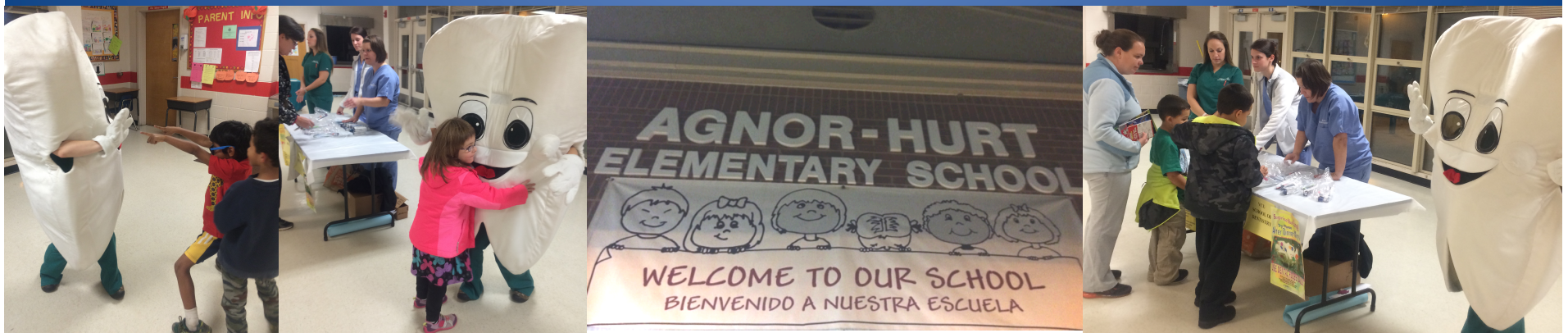
- In collaboration with the Occupational Therapy and Gerontology programs at VCU, an in-service/workshop was held for residents of an assisted living facility



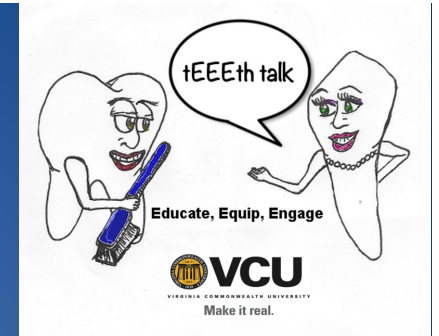
# Workshop Settings



- Exhibition at elementary school's first annual health fair in collaboration with community healthcare and health promotion organizations

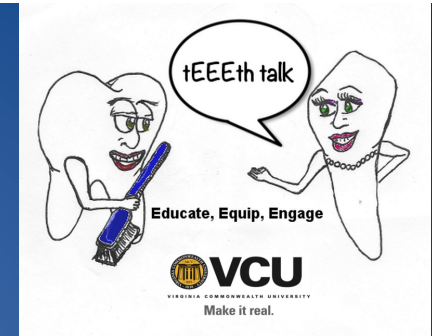


# Lessons Learned



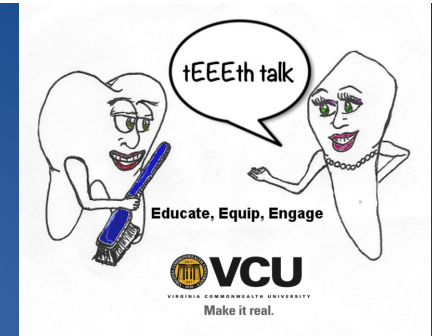
- Health Literacy
  - oral health knowledge (disease and hygiene)
    - presenting didactic content in accessible form
- Access
  - financial barriers, ignorance of resources
    - empathy and social responsibility prompted
- Interconnectedness of Social Determinants of Health
  - multidisciplinary approach is necessary to better understand and meet needs

# Benefits

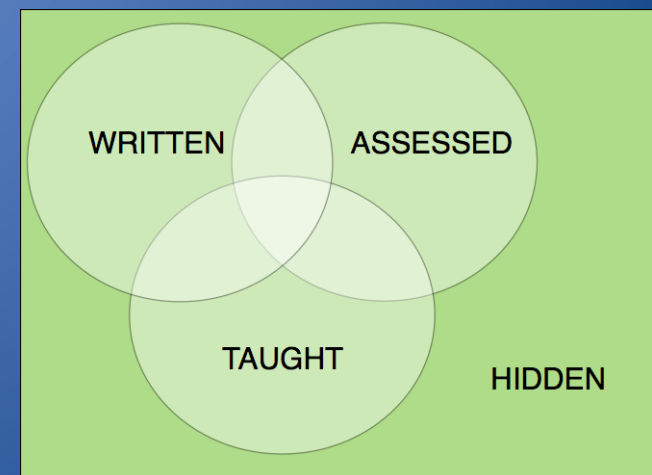


- Meaning and purpose gained for preclinical coursework by applying didactic/simulation experiences to meet the need of a community partner
- Effective patient communication developed and practiced
- Camaraderie with classmates
- Principles of ethics/professionalism examined

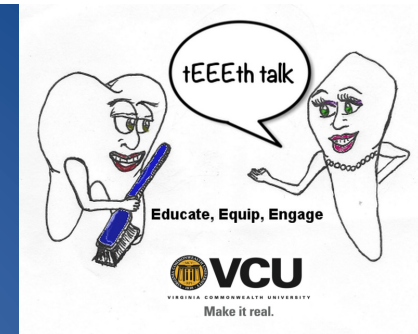
# Sustaining SL Initiatives



- Accreditation Standards
  - SL throughout curriculum
  - extra-curricular → co-curricular
- Hidden Curriculum
  - support for student initiatives
- aaPHD chapter has adopted *tEEEth talk* for sustainability



# References



1. Service Learning Institute. May 5, 2014. Virginia Commonwealth University
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3. Celio CI, Durak J, Dymnicki A. 2011. A Meta-analysis of the Impact of Service-Learning on Students. *Journal of Experiential Education*. 34(2):164-181.
4. Lockeman KS, Pelco LE. 2013. The Relationship between Service-Learning and Degree Completion. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. 18-30.
5. Hendricson WD, Cohen PA. 2001. Oral Health Care in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Implications for Dental and Medical Education. *Academic Medicine*. 76(12): 1181-1206.
6. Hendricson WD, Cohen PA. 1999. Future Directions in Dental School Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning. American Association of Dental Schools 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summit Conference Paper. 1-26.

# Thank You!

“I hate to be taught, but I love to learn”

-Winston Churchill

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