



Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation

NEWS RELEASE

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Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation hosts free dental care event for local children Sept. 13 *Free exams satisfy the mandatory dental screening for kindergarten*

NAPERVILLE, Ill. (July 23, 2014) – The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, in collaboration with the Douglas County Health Department and Lake Land College, will provide a free day of dental care for Illinois children age 5 and younger as part of its Dentist By 1 program on Saturday, Sept. 13 in Mattoon. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to schedule free exams, which can satisfy the mandatory dental screening for kindergarten.

At the event, up to 120 Illinois children will receive free preventive and diagnostic services such as cleanings, exams, fluoride treatments and X-rays. Preventive education and referrals for additional dental care will also be provided.

The event is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Lake Land College Dental Clinic at 5001 Lake Land Boulevard, NW Building in Mattoon. Parents and caregivers must schedule appointments by Sept. 5 by visiting ddilsite.com/parentregistration or ddilsite.com/spanishregistration (registration in Spanish) or by calling 630-718-4764 or 630-718-4957 (registration in Spanish). Dental visits without an appointment will be limited.

“It’s important for dental care and oral health habits to begin when children are young. Tooth decay can develop any time after teeth appear in the mouth, starting at 6 months of age,” said Lora Vitek, director of philanthropy & community relations for the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation. “There is a real need for oral health care and education for underserved children in Illinois. We’re hoping this event will help more young children in the area get started on a path to good oral health.”

The free dental care event is part of a two-day educational session to help Illinois dentists gain the tools necessary to treat young children and have an opportunity to give back to the community. Dental professionals will also receive CE credits.

“The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation is dedicated to improving the oral health of Illinois children,” said Vitek. “We’re excited to partner with the Douglas County Health Department and Lake Land College to provide much needed oral health care to some of the state’s youngest residents – many of whom may not have any other access to care.”

During the community service event, Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation’s Tooth Wizard and PlaqueMan from the “Land of Smiles” oral health education program will interact with children and their caregivers, educating them about proper oral health habits. Each child will also receive an oral health kit with a toothbrush, floss, toothpaste and a dental care instructional sheet in English and Spanish.

Generous donations of dental supplies have been provided by Patterson Companies, Inc. The event is also being supported by Crest/Oral-B®.

In 2012, the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation launched the Dentist By 1 program to educate caregivers about why children should visit the dentist by age 1 and to encourage them to schedule an appointment. Children in Illinois don't see their family dentist on average until they are 3½ years old.¹ Visiting the dentist by age 1 allows the child and parent to establish a relationship with a dentist, which can help set a foundation for dental health care and habits.

For more information about the Dentist By 1 program or to support the efforts to provide oral health kits to children who need them, visit dentistby1.com.

About Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation

The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation (DDILF) was formed in March 2008 by Delta Dental of Illinois (DDIL), a not-for-profit dental service corporation with a mission to improve the oral health of the communities it serves. DDILF is the 501(c)(3) charitable arm of DDIL and works to support and improve the oral health of people in Illinois. In the past decade, combined efforts of DDIL and DDILF have provided more than \$2 million to programs and organizations in Illinois that improve the oral health of the residents of Illinois.

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¹Delta Dental of Illinois 2011 Claims Data.