



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, February 26, 2018

Contact:

Liz Jans
Meyocks
319-321-5695
lizjans@meyocks.com

Additional Media Contact:

Lyndsay Bradshaw
Delta Dental of Illinois
630-718-4753
lbradshaw@deltadentalil.com

Tooth Fairy payouts dip 15 percent in Midwest

Illinois kids still pocket more than \$9 million for lost baby teeth

NAPERVILLE, Ill. – Feb. 26, 2018 – The Tooth Fairy tightened her purse strings after an all-time high payout for lost teeth in 2016. According to the [Original Tooth Fairy Poll](#), sponsored by Delta Dental, the going rate for a lost tooth in the Midwest dropped from \$4.04 in 2016 to \$3.44 in 2017. Despite her stinginess, the Tooth Fairy still paid a staggering \$9 million to Illinois kids for lost teeth last year.

Nationally, parents reported that cash gifts dropped to an average of \$4.13 per lost tooth last year, down from \$4.66 in 2016. Even with the decreased value of a lost tooth, the Tooth Fairy still shelled out a healthy \$271 million to children across the nation.

The Original Tooth Fairy Poll has typically served as a good indicator of the economy's overall direction, tracking with the movement of Standard & Poor's 500 Index (S&P 500) for 12 of the past 14 years. The December 2017 poll shows the Tooth Fairy hasn't quite been able to keep up with the market's hot pace – with an 11 percent decrease in giving for 2016, while the S&P 500 saw a total return of almost 18 percent in 2017.

Cash payouts for a child's first lost tooth – typically higher than the average giving rate – are also down 23 percent in the Midwest from \$5.70 in 2016 to \$4.37 last year. Nationally, the payout for a first tooth decreased slightly from \$5.72 to \$5.70.

“Losing teeth can be scary for kids. Tooth Fairy visits are a great way to make the milestone more exciting and enjoyable for them,” said Dr. Sheila Strock, Vice President, Dental Services and Science Officer at Delta Dental of Illinois. “Although children should learn about good oral health habits at an early age, a visit from the Tooth Fairy provides a great opportunity to reinforce why taking care of teeth is so important.”

According to the poll, the Tooth Fairy visits 84 percent of the nation's households with children; and in 95 percent of those homes, leaves money. By region, Tooth Fairy payouts are highest in the West: \$4.85 (\$6.76 for the first tooth); followed by the Northeast at \$4.35 (\$6.45); the South at \$4.12 (\$5.68); and the Midwest at \$3.44 (\$4.37).

In addition to or instead of money, the Tooth Fairy often leaves gifts that strengthen children's oral health habits, giving toothbrushes (31 percent), toothpaste (24 percent) and dental floss (16 percent).

For more information about the Original Tooth Fairy Poll and ways to make your child's Tooth Fairy experience extra special, visit OriginalToothFairyPoll.com.

About Delta Dental of Illinois

Delta Dental of Illinois is a not-for-profit dental service corporation that provides dental benefit programs to individuals and more than 6,000 employee groups throughout Illinois. Delta Dental of Illinois covers 2 million individuals, employees and family members nationwide. Delta Dental of Illinois is based in Naperville, Illinois and offers single-site administration and client services.

###

About the Survey: The Original Tooth Fairy Poll was conducted between Dec. 13 and Dec. 28, 2017 among a nationally representative sample of 1,007 parents of children ages 6-12. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percent.