



NEWS RELEASE

Delta Dental of Illinois
111 Shuman Boulevard
Naperville, Illinois 60563

Contact:
Liz Jans
The Meyocks Group
515-238-4304
lizjans@meyocks.com

Free Dental Care for Children at First-Ever Dentist By 1 Community Service Event in Elgin *Two-Day Dentist Seminar Underscores Importance of Dental Visits for Young Children*

NAPERVILLE, Ill. (July 9, 2013) – The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, along with Elgin Community College and Greater Elgin Family Care Center, will host the first-ever Dentist By 1 Community Service Event to provide free dental care to underserved Illinois children age 5 and younger.

The event, part of a two-day educational session for local dentists, is scheduled for Friday, August 9 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Elgin Community College Dental Clinic at 1700 Spartan Drive, Building A in Elgin. Illinois children age 5 and younger will receive preventive dental care at no cost and with no need to schedule appointments.

“The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation is dedicated to improving the oral health of Illinois’ children,” said Dr. Frank Maggio, chair of the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation Board and an Elgin periodontist. “Tooth decay is nearly 100 percent preventable, but can develop any time after teeth appear in the mouth, starting at 6 months of age. So it’s important to begin dental care and oral health habits when children are very young. We’re hoping this event will help more young children in Illinois get started on a path to good oral health.”

The event is open to up to 60 children on a first-come, first-served basis. Services offered will include dental exams, X-rays, cleanings, fluoride treatments, preventive education and referrals for additional care if necessary. The visit can also satisfy the mandatory dental screening for kindergarten. Written parental /guardian consent is required prior to any services being performed. Questions can be directed to 630-718-4764 (Spanish callers can direct questions to 630-718-4957).

Dentists and dental teams (minimum of two and maximum of four members per team) interested in volunteering can contact the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation at 630-718-4764 or lvitek@deltadentalil.com. Teams can also register online at ddilsite.com/dentistby1seminar.

In support of Delta Dental of Illinois’ Dentist By 1 campaign, which educates parents and caregivers about the importance of taking their children to the dentist by age 1, the Dentist By 1 Educational Session and Community Service Event will help dentists and their staff gain the tools necessary to feel more comfortable adding young children as patients.

“Our Dentist By 1 program kicked off last year to educate caregivers about why children should visit the dentist by age 1 and to encourage them to schedule a visit. We are delighted to expand that program by offering education for community dentists and, at the same time, provide a great community service of free preventive and diagnostic dental care for local children – many of whom may not have any other access to care,” Dr. Maggio said.

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By visiting the dentist by age 1, the child and parent can establish a relationship with a dentist, which can help set a foundation for dental health care and habits. Additionally, studies show that early preventive dental care like check-ups and cleanings can save on future dental treatment costs.

During the community service event, Delta Dental of Illinois' Tooth Wizard and PlaqueMan will perform the "Land of Smiles" show, educating event-goers about proper oral health habits. Delta Dental of Illinois has provided the free show to hundreds of Illinois schools and more than 33,000 students this year alone. Each child will also receive an oral health kit with a toothbrush, floss, toothpaste and an oral health instructional sheet in English and Spanish.

Generous support of gloves, masks, fluoride, X-ray film, and other dental supplies provide by Henry Schein.

To support the Dentist By 1 program and the efforts to provide oral health kits to children who need them, visit dentistby1.com and select Donate for Healthy Smiles.

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 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 that provide oral health education and expand access to oral health care for Illinois residents. DDIL provides dental benefit programs to individuals and more than 5,000 employee groups throughout Illinois and covers two million employees and family members nationwide. DDIL and DDILF are based in Naperville, Illinois.

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