



NEWS RELEASE

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Free Dental Care Event for Illinois Children on July 31

Free exams satisfy the mandatory dental screening for kindergarten

Naperville, Ill. (June 11, 2015) – The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, in collaboration with Peoria City/County Health Department, Illinois Central College’s Dental Hygiene School and Children’s Hospital of Illinois, will provide a free day of dental care for Illinois children age 5 and younger on Friday, July 31 in Peoria. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to schedule free exams, which can satisfy the mandatory dental screening for kindergarten.

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

The event, part of Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation’s Dentist By 1 program, is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Illinois Central College Downtown Campus, Room Thomas 105L, at 201 SW Adams Street in Peoria. Appointments are strongly recommended. Parents and caregivers can schedule an appointment by visiting dentistby1.com/illinois/events/parentregistration/register/ or by calling 630-718-4764. Appointments must be made by July 24. Dental visits without an appointment will be limited.

“We are pleased to partner with the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation to provide free care to Illinois children,” said Cathleen Korondi, dental hygiene program director at Illinois Central College. “As a dental professional, I see firsthand the need for oral health care in our state and how tooth decay – a largely preventable disease – can affect a child’s overall well-being. Through this event, we hope to provide education about preventive care and reduce the amount of tooth decay among our youngest patients.”

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 good 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.

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 Scheduling a dentist visit by age 1 allows the child and parent to establish a relationship with a dentist, which can help set a lifetime foundation for dental health care and habits.

"Tooth decay is the most common childhood disease and can affect a child as soon as teeth appear in the mouth," said Lora Vitek, director of philanthropy & community relations for the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation. "Tooth decay is preventable and in an effort to combat it, our Dentist By 1 program aims to educate Illinois children and their caregivers about the importance of preventive care. This free day of dental care will make an immediate impact for many Illinois children and their families, and we are hopeful the education provided lasts a lifetime and results in improved oral health."

Generous donations of dental supplies have been provided by Patterson Dental, Ultradent Products, Inc., Johnson & Johnson and Darby Dental Supply, LLC . The event is also being supported by Crest/Oral-B®.

For more information about the Dentist By 1 program, visit dentistby1.com/illinois.

About Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation

The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation was formed in March 2008 by Delta Dental of Illinois, a not-for-profit dental service corporation with a mission to improve the oral health of the communities it serves. Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation is the 501(c)(3) charitable arm of Delta Dental of Illinois and works to support and improve the oral health of people in Illinois. In the past decade, combined efforts of Delta Dental of Illinois and Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation 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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¹*Delta Dental of Illinois 2011 Claims Data.*