



THE ORIGINAL

Tooth Fairy Poll®



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Tooth Fairy Feeling Economic Crunch

Delta Dental survey shows the going rate for lost baby teeth dropped 42 cents in past year

NAPERVILLE, Ill. (Feb. 23, 2012) – The average gift from the Tooth Fairy dropped to \$2.10 last year, but she’s still visiting nearly 90 percent of homes, according to [The Original Tooth Fairy Poll®](#) sponsored by Delta Dental.¹ That average gift is down 42 cents from \$2.52 in 2010. The 17 percent drop in value is one of the larger declines since Delta Dental began conducting the Original Tooth Fairy Poll® in 1998.

“Like many people in Illinois and across the country, the Tooth Fairy needed to tighten her belt in 2011, but she’s hopeful for a recovery this year,” said Dr. Katina Morelli, DDS, dental director for Delta Dental of Illinois. “More importantly, Delta Dental is encouraged that parents are still making visits to the dentist a priority for their children.” In fact, 90 percent of those surveyed say they take their children to the dentist every six months.

The Original Tooth Fairy Poll®, which surveyed 1,355 parents across the country, yielded these additional findings:

- The most common amount left under the pillow by the Tooth Fairy is \$1.
- Most children find more money under the pillow for their first lost baby tooth.
- Thirty-five percent of those surveyed allow their children 3-4 sugary drinks a day. Dentists say that’s too many.
- Seventy-one percent of those surveyed first take their child to the dentist between 2-3 years old. Dental professionals recommend that parents take their children to the dentist by age 1 or within six months after the first tooth erupts.

Tracking the DJIA

The Original Tooth Fairy Poll[®] has generally been a good barometer of the economy's overall direction. In fact, the trend in average giving has tracked with movement of the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) in seven of the past 10 years.

“Like the Tooth Fairy, we at Delta Dental are hopeful for better economic news in 2012,” Morelli said. “In the meantime, we will continue to support programs that provide access to dental care for those who would otherwise not have it.” In the past decade, the combined efforts of Delta Dental of Illinois and its Foundation 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.

Encouraging Healthy Habits

The Original Tooth Fairy Poll[®] reflects a partnership between the Tooth Fairy and Delta Dental to promote good dental hygiene habits that encourage healthy mouths and healthy smiles. To help the Tooth Fairy and Delta Dental keep track of this longtime tradition, take the Original Tooth Fairy Poll[®] at www.theoriginaltoothfairypoll.com. And, to get a sense of the taste and style choices of the Tooth Fairy, follow her at www.pinterest.com/origtoothfairy.

About Delta Dental of Illinois

Delta Dental of Illinois (DDIL) is one of 39 independently operated member companies of the Delta Dental Plans Association. Delta Dental is *by far* the largest dental benefits carrier in the country, with Delta Dental member companies covering one-third of all Americans who have dental insurance. DDIL is a not-for-profit dental service corporation headquartered in Naperville, Illinois that offers dental benefit programs to Illinois groups and individuals and has a mission to improve the oral health of Illinoisans. For information about how DDIL works to improve the wellness and oral health of its enrollees and Illinoisans, or for information about group and individual dental programs, visit www.deltadentalil.com.

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¹ Delta Dental conducted the Original Tooth Fairy Poll[®] among customers across the United States. For results based on the total sample of 1,355, the margin of error is +/- 2.66 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level.