



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contacts:

Brian Sorenson

KSA (Kathy Schaeffer and Associates, Inc.)

312-251-9949

bsorenson@ksapr.com

Lyndsay Bradshaw

Delta Dental of Illinois

630-718-4753

lbradshaw@deltadentalil.com

Wall Street Flux Affects Tooth Fairy Giving for Illinois Children

Illinois children receive 44 percent less than national average

NAPERVILLE, Ill. (February 25, 2016) – Not even the Tooth Fairy is spared from the effects of Wall Street tumult. For the second consecutive year the Tooth Fairy has left Illinois children with an average amount per tooth that's below the national average. According to [The Original Tooth Fairy Poll®](#), sponsored by Delta Dental of Illinois, the Tooth Fairy leaves \$2.71 per tooth in Illinois, down slightly from the national average of \$3.91 and last year's Illinois average of \$2.89.

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 13 years. This year, however, the Tooth Fairy must have been using predictive analytics as the market continues to take losses beyond the 8.2 percent drop during the time the survey was conducted compared to 2014.

In 2015, the Tooth Fairy gave a total of \$256 million nationally for lost teeth, up just .6 percent from 2014 in spite of 5 percent more parents saying she left money for their children this year. Cash gifts for a child's first lost tooth, typically higher than average, are also down by 9.23 percent nationally. Children in Illinois receive a bonus from the Tooth Fairy for the loss of their first tooth, profiting an average of \$4.63 to mark the occasion.

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For times when the Tooth Fairy left something other than or in addition to money, Illinois children have received a small toy or game (50 percent), a book (39 percent), a pillow (28 percent) or an oral hygiene product such as a toothbrush (33 percent) or floss (17 percent).

In 2015, the Tooth Fairy visited 82 percent of Illinois homes, compared with 86 percent of homes nationally. Although parents largely believe the reward they expect to receive excites children most (79 percent), nearly a quarter (21 percent) of Illinois children believe that the simple fact that the Tooth Fairy is visiting is exciting enough.

“It’s great to see children excited for a visit from the Tooth Fairy,” said Dr. Katina Spadoni, dental director for Delta Dental of Illinois. “Even a modest reward can encourage children to think about their teeth. Parents should encourage that habit when children are young, placing close attention on their children’s teeth as soon as their first tooth grows.”

In addition, Delta Dental of Illinois found that Tooth Fairy giving varies across the nation. As it turns out, the Tooth Fairy may also factor in the cost of living, varying the rate per tooth per region: Northeasterners (\$5.27), Westerners (\$4.25), Southerners (\$3.63), and Midwesterners (\$3.11).

The poll found regional differences in the Tooth Fairy’s penchant for forgetfulness too, forgetting to pick up a tooth 38 percent of the time in Illinois compared to more than a third of the time nationally (35 percent); almost half of the time in the Midwest (46 percent); more than a quarter of the time in the West (36 percent) and South (34 percent); and 23 percent of the time in the Northeast.

Other notable findings from The Original Tooth Fairy Poll® include:

- A majority (62 percent) of respondents say that giving their children something to be excited about is a good reason for the Tooth Fairy’s visit.
- Illinois moms are overwhelming more likely to help the Tooth Fairy, with 83 percent of respondents saying the role of Tooth Fairy helper is played by the children’s mother.
- Forty-three percent of Illinois children have gone to bed early in anticipation of the Tooth Fairy’s visit.

About the Survey: The Children’s Tooth Fairy Survey was conducted between December 16, 2015 and January 14, 2016 among an Illinois representative sample of 357 parents of children ages 6-12. The margin of error is +/- 2.7 percent.

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About Delta Dental of Illinois

Delta Dental of Illinois (DDIL) is a not-for-profit dental service corporation that provides dental benefit programs to individuals and more than 5,000 employee groups throughout Illinois. DDIL covers 2 million individuals, employees and family members nationwide. DDIL is based in Naperville, Illinois and offers single-site administration and client services.