



2017 Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation  
Annual Report



# Partnering with Organizations to Improve Children's Oral Health Through Education and Advocacy

At Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, the 501(c)(3) charitable arm of Delta Dental of Illinois, our mission is to improve oral health in Illinois with a focus on children. We accomplish our mission by advancing and improving oral health access, awareness and education.

Education is a key component of our mission, and we work to increase our efforts by partnering with other organizations in Illinois who also share our mission. In 2017, we worked with the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law (the Shriver Center) and the Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation (ILCHF) to host listening sessions for oral health care stakeholders and leaders as a way to gain an understanding of oral health challenges and issues and to work toward development of an advocacy and education agenda.

Partnerships with the Shriver Center and ILCHF were formed in response to the 2016 *Oral Health in Illinois* statewide oral health assessment we conducted alongside ILCHF and the Michael Reese Health Trust. The study highlighted inequities in dental care in Illinois and showed that tooth decay disproportionately affects poor and rural residents of the state. One of the goals of the statewide assessment was to motivate the oral health community to take action and find solutions to improve oral health and ensure better access to oral health services for all Illinoisans. Our partnership with the Shriver Center and ILCHF helps accomplish this objective.

The listening sessions, hosted by ILCHF and Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, were held throughout the state from August through October. The listening sessions provided an overview of the 2016 *Oral Health in Illinois* statewide assessment, focused on the importance of keeping pediatric dental care provisions in the ACA and Medicaid programs and discussed ways to advocate for children's dental health on a legislative level.



By partnering with the Shriver Center and ILCHF, we have expanded our education efforts to include advocacy which allows us to have a direct impact on oral health services that are available to children in our state. Our legislative action, in turn, supports a key part of our mission to improve children's oral health in Illinois.

"We were pleased to work with the Illinois Children's Healthcare Foundation and Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation to help increase health advocacy in our state," said Stephanie Altman, senior director of policy and director of healthcare justice for Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law. "For more than 50 years, the Shriver Center has been working to ensure justice for everyone, and one of our main goals is to make sure everyone has access to high-quality and affordable health care. With the support of our partners, we are able to strengthen and protect programs that provide much needed health services to Illinois children."

## 2017 Listening Sessions



**132**  
oral health  
professionals  
and policy  
makers  
attended



**5**  
sessions held  
across the state in  
DuPage County,  
Bloomington,  
Marion, Springfield  
and Peoria





## Oral Health Tools and Materials

Many Illinois children and their families don't have the tools or knowledge to properly care for their teeth. For that reason, we distribute toothbrushes and materials on an in-kind basis to help increase education and access to oral health care.

### 2017 In-Kind Donations

**100,000+**  
oral health kits distributed  
(toothbrush, floss, toothpaste)

**250,000+**  
oral health educational  
materials distributed



**dentist by 1™**  
Cavities are nearly 100% preventable.



Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation  
wisdom tooth award



community  
grants  
program



## How Education Supports Our Mission

Through education, Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation is able to improve oral health in Illinois, which is our ultimate goal. We have developed several oral health education programs that focus on the importance of preventive care, especially for children. Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation promotes preventive oral health care through its Dentist By 1, Wisdom Tooth Award, Community Grants and Land of Smiles programs. Similar to our advocacy efforts, these programs provide oral health resources and services to Illinois communities.

According to the *Oral Health in Illinois* statewide oral health assessment in 2016, 22 percent of third graders and 2.48 million adults in Illinois have untreated tooth decay.<sup>1</sup> Although it is one of the most prevalent diseases among children, tooth decay is preventable with proper dental care and education, which is why education is central to everything we do.

Through each of our oral health programs, we aim to help children establish an oral health routine early in life and continue good oral health habits into adulthood. Our Dentist By 1 program encourages parents to take their child to the dentist by age 1 and provides free dental care for children. Our Wisdom Tooth Award and Community Grants programs offer funding to organizations that deliver oral health education and/or care with an emphasis on prevention. Our Land of Smiles program is an educational presentation featuring Tooth Wizard and PlaqueMan which travels to elementary schools across the state teaching students the importance of good oral health habits. We also provide training for oral health professionals through our Dentist By 1 program which focuses on different aspects of pediatric dental care.

All of our programs and initiatives educate Illinoisans on the benefits of achieving and maintaining a healthy smile and work to eliminate barriers communities face when it comes to access to dental care.

<sup>1</sup>2016 *Oral Health in Illinois* Statewide Oral Health Assessment: <http://oralhealthillinois.org/>



## Promoting Preventive Dental Care through Our Dentist By 1 Program

Visiting the dentist by age 1 or within six months after the first tooth erupts is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Scheduling a dental visit by a child's first birthday not only helps establish a relationship with the dentist, but also helps children get started on the path to good oral health. The Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation's Dentist By 1 program teaches caregivers the importance of age 1 dental visits, trains oral health professionals on treating young patients and provides free dental care to children age 5 and younger.

Although it is recommended to see the dentist by age 1, Illinois children don't see their family dentist on average until they are nearly 3 years old.<sup>2</sup> Tooth decay can occur as soon as teeth are present in the mouth. Untreated tooth decay may cause discomfort for children, affect their ability to eat and speak, and lead to future oral and overall health problems, which further supports the need for preventive education through the Dentist By 1 program.

In 2017, Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation partnered with Cook County Health & Hospitals System and Malcolm X College to train oral health professionals on the different aspects of a pediatric dental exam and provide free care to children age 5 and younger. The training was held on Aug. 4, and the oral health professionals who attended the training provided free dental care to the Chicagoland community the following day at Malcolm X College. Children in attendance received free preventive and diagnostic services like cleanings, exams, fluoride treatments, sealants and X-rays. Preventive education and referrals for additional dental care was provided, and each child received an oral health kit with floss, a toothbrush, toothpaste and a dental care instructional sheet.

<sup>2</sup>2017 Delta Dental of Illinois Children's Oral Health Survey.



dentist by 1™

Cavities are nearly 100% preventable.

### 2017 Dentist By 1 Results

88  
Illinois children  
received care

27  
oral health professionals  
participated in  
the training and  
delivered care

75%  
of the children  
treated had never  
been to the  
dentist before

26%  
of the children  
treated showed  
signs of tooth decay

In addition to educating oral health professionals, parents and caregivers, Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation also conducted a media outreach campaign to ensure the general public heard about the event and the reasons why children should visit the dentist by age 1. The Dentist By 1 free dental care event was featured by 18 media outlets, including a news feature on WGN-TV in Chicago.

With our Dentist By 1 training sessions, media outreach and the free dental care event, Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation works to raise awareness and educate the community on the necessity for good oral health and preventive oral care at an early age.





Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation  
wisdom tooth award

Every year, we grant a \$100,000 Wisdom Tooth Award to an organization that significantly improves the oral health of Illinois children through either providing oral health education and/or increasing dental care.



2017 Wisdom Tooth Award Recipient

**\$100,000**

granted to University of Illinois at Chicago  
(UIC) College of Dentistry

The grant is being used for general anesthesia equipment in the UIC College of Dentistry pediatric dental clinic to help treat children in need of extensive dental treatment or who have special healthcare needs.



Land of Smiles, an interactive oral health educational program, furthers our mission by teaching Illinois children how to properly care for their teeth. During the program, students help Tooth Wizard defeat his nemesis PlaqueMan by learning the habits needed to have healthy smiles. In addition to oral health lessons, children who participate in Land of Smiles receive an oral health kit with a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss and a booklet packed with oral health tips. Schools receive a curriculum kit to help educators reinforce good oral health habits with students throughout the year.



2017 Land of Smiles Results

More than **39,000** children  
ages 5-9 were taught preventive  
oral health care lessons

**163** schools visited in **46** Illinois counties





We annually award grants to organizations that are dedicated to educating and increasing access to oral health care for Illinois children.

Through the Community Grants Program, Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation also provides educational opportunities for our grant recipients. At the 2017 Community Grants reception, representatives from 19 grant recipient organizations participated in a special workshop titled “Healthy Literacy: Why Don’t My Patients Do What I Tell Them?” by Dr. Holli Seabury, CEO of McMillen Health. The workshop discussed ways to design easy-to-understand health materials, how to use video and other media to engage patients and how to reduce patient no-show rates by using effective communication.



## 2017 Community Grants

19  
grants totaling  
\$175,000

Grant funding supports:

- Preventive oral health education
- Oral health care services for children
- Dental staff and equipment to improve access to care



## Oak Park River Forest Infant Welfare Society – Oak Park, IL

Oak Park River Forest Infant Welfare Society (OPRF IWS) Children’s Clinic will use the 2017 community grant to support the Oral Health Outreach and Education program, which provides preventive dental care and oral health education to low-income Chicago-area children. OPRF IWS Children’s Clinic is a full-service pediatric health clinic providing services to children in west Cook and DuPage counties and the city of Chicago.



# Thanks to Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation's Partners for their Generous Support

Thanks to the generous support from partner organizations, Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation has been able to expand its reach and fund many programs that will continue to improve oral health in Illinois.

## Special thanks to:

- Delta Dental of Illinois and its Foundation board members, staff and friends of the organization
- Community Memorial Foundation
- Crest + Oral-B
- Henry Schein Dental
- Hinshaw & Culbertson
- The Carle Foundation
- MB Financial

Please consider making a donation to the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation. When you make a donation to the Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation, you help us provide oral health education and dental care to Illinois children. Your donation can bring a "Land of Smiles" show to an elementary school, help a child get treatment for tooth decay, provide special training for oral health professionals, and more. In addition, 95 percent of the donations received are directly used to fund oral health programs, and donations to the Foundation are tax deductible.

Visit [ddilsite.com/foundation](https://ddilsite.com/foundation) to make a secure online donation today.



Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation

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