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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kids gain access to regular dental care in Ohio's first, in-school clinic

Partners celebrate opening of Delta Dental Center at Oyler School

Cincinnati—Community members and program partners officially opened and celebrated a unique collaborative effort leading to the first self-sustaining, in-school dental clinic in the State of Ohio. The Delta Dental Center at Oyler, run by the Cincinnati Health Department and the Cincinnati Dental Society's Oral Health Foundation, operates with three dental chairs and will serve 900 children from Oyler School and the surrounding community. By the third year the clinic is expected to reach full capacity, providing service to more than 1,300 children.

Dental care is consistently ranked as the number one unmet health need in Ohio and the picture for children is troubling. Based on dental screening statistics, it is estimated that 4,300 Cincinnati Public School (CPS) children attend school each day with immediate dental treatment needs. The Delta Dental Center at Oyler is a critical asset in meeting oral health care needs and creating a seamless system of accessible, affordable care for children ages 0-18 in Cincinnati.

"The reality is that every day children in our schools miss learning opportunities because of dental pain. This collaborative, public/private partnership will ensure treatment for many children and ultimately improve academic performance," said Dr. Marilyn Crumpton director of School and Adolescent Health, Cincinnati Health Department.

Mary Ronan, superintendent of Cincinnati Public Schools agrees.

"The pain and stigma associated with untreated dental problems lead to academic problems in the classroom. Oyler School is a shining example of what can be achieved when the community learning center model is embraced," she said.

The Delta Dental Center at Oyler School is another success for the Community Learning Center model which is being incorporated throughout the CPS district.

For years the Cincinnati Health Department has conducted dental screenings, made referrals, and provided treatment for many children in need of services. However, service demand has exceeded supply. Over a year ago, with assistance from Interact for Health, a group of community partners began meeting in an effort to quantify the extent of the childhood dental care problem in Cincinnati. In addition to the opening of the Delta Dental Center this collaborative, the Children's Oral Health Network has developed an extensive plan to improve access to dental care for children and to provide education for providers, students, parents and the community.

Paul Rudolph, director of the Children's Oral Health Network added, "This really would not have been possible without each and every one of our partners. Children in our region will be healthier and have a better chance for success in life as a result of these contributions."

Through an unprecedented collaboration, the Cincinnati Dental Society's Oral Health Foundation is providing volunteers exclusively to serve uninsured kids in need of oral care. Start-up costs were paid through contributions from the Delta Dental Foundation, Procter & Gamble, Cincinnati Dental Society's Oral Health Foundation, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and Interact for Health. Oyer School also houses a school based health center and the Onesight Vision Center operated by the Cincinnati Health Department's primary care network.

"Delta Dental has been a long-time supporter of programs that improve children's oral health, and we are proud to provide major support for this unique in-school clinic," said Teri Battaglieri, director of the Delta Dental Foundation. With children missing 51 million hours of school each year due to oral health problems, it's initiatives such as this that ensure students show up to school every day healthy, pain free, and ready to learn."

This project would not have been possible without the generous contributions of all of the founding partners:

- Children's Oral Health Network
- Cincinnati Dental Society's Oral Health Foundation
- Cincinnati Health Department
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center
- Cincinnati Public Schools
- Community Learning Center Institute
- Delta Dental Foundation
- Growing Well Cincinnati
- Interact for Health
- Junior League of Cincinnati
- Oyer School
- Procter & Gamble

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