



## NEWS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

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### **Delta Dental launches Black Hawk County ‘Dentist by 1’ grant program**

*Program includes \$100,000 investment to improve oral health in Black Hawk County*

**JOHNSTON, Iowa (May 8, 2012)** – As part of the 2012 “Dentist by 1” public service campaign, the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation is launching a new grant program to help improve the oral health of children in Black Hawk County.

Only eight percent of Iowa children see their family dentist by age 1.<sup>1</sup> That’s a staggering fact when it’s recommended that children should go to the dentist within six months of getting their first tooth – and no later than their first birthday.<sup>2</sup>

Last year, the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation launched the “Dentist by 1” campaign to educate Iowa parents about the benefits of taking their children to the dentist by age 1 and encourage them to schedule a visit.

“Tooth decay is nearly 100 percent preventable. But to help prevent cavities, it’s important to begin good oral health habits, like visiting the dentist, when children are very young,” said Dr. Ed Schooley, dental director for Delta Dental of Iowa and Foundation board member.

The new Black Hawk County “Dentist by 1” Mini-Grant Program includes 10 grants of up to \$10,000 for short-term oral health projects that focus on activities supporting the “Dentist by 1” campaign goals in Black Hawk County, including:

- Educating parents about the importance of baby teeth and ways to prevent dental pain for children.
- Educating parents about how to find a dentist for young children, as well as how to prepare and what to expect at the first visit.
- Educating providers and provider offices about the “Dentist by 1” campaign.

Organizations interested in more information or downloading a grant application, can visit

the new campaign website at [www.DentistBy1.com](http://www.DentistBy1.com). The deadline to apply is June 1, 2012.

In addition to the new grant program, the Foundation will also launch a multi-media “Dentist by 1” public service campaign in Black Hawk county, including TV, radio, online and transit advertising.

“The ‘Dentist by 1’ campaign aligns with the Foundation’s new strategic goal of every Iowa child age 0-12 being cavity-free by 2020,” said Donn Hutchins, president and CEO of Delta Dental of Iowa and Foundation president. “Data from Delta Dental shows that despite having dental benefits, on average Iowa children are not having their first dental exam until after age 3, which is two years too late.”

As part of the campaign, the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation is providing educational materials to Iowa hospitals, clinics, pediatricians and OB-GYN offices. Black Hawk County businesses and organizations can also order free “Dentist by 1” materials to help educate parents at [www.DentistBy1.com](http://www.DentistBy1.com).

The Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation’s “Dentist by 1” campaign is supported by the Iowa Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Iowa Department of Public Health and University of Iowa College of Dentistry.

For more information on the importance of visiting the dentist by age 1 and tips on establishing good oral health habits, visit [www.DentistBy1.com](http://www.DentistBy1.com).

*Delta Dental of Iowa is the largest and most experienced provider of dental benefits in the state. As a not-for-profit, Delta Dental of Iowa invests in oral health projects through the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation that focus on access to care, prevention, education and research. Delta Dental of Iowa is a member of the Delta Dental Plans Association, a national organization of not-for-profit Delta Dental member companies. The national association is the largest dental benefits carrier in the nation providing coverage to 54 million people in more than 93,600 employer groups.*

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<sup>1</sup>Delta Dental of Iowa 2010 Claims Data.

<sup>2</sup>American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Dental Association.