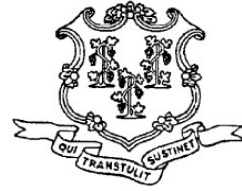


# Press Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Monday, January 30, 2006**

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## **February is Children's Dental Health Month**

*"Give Kids a Smile Day" on February 3rd kicks off awareness month*

**Hartford** – The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) reminds you that February is *Children's Dental Health Month*, as proclaimed by the American Dental Association (ADA) and its members nationwide, including the Connecticut State Dental Association.

*Children's Dental Health Month* is designed to raise awareness about good oral health among the youngest members of our communities – our children. According to the ADA, untreated oral diseases and conditions can have painful, disfiguring and lasting negative health consequences. Early diagnosis, preventive treatments and early intervention can prevent or halt the progress of most oral diseases. More and more research points to the link between oral health and overall health.

"Getting kids into the habit of visiting a dentist at an early age ingrains healthy habits that last a lifetime," said DPH Commissioner J. Robert Galvin, MD, MPH. "Even with increased dental visits, the advent of fluoride in toothpaste and many public water sources, the chronic infectious disease that causes cavities remains second only to the common cold in terms of prevalence in children. A dentist – seen early and often – can provide both parents and children information to treat and prevent this disease at its earliest stages."

The ADA founded *Give Kids A Smile Day* to raise public awareness of what the U.S. Surgeon General has called a "silent epidemic" of dental disease and to encourage parents, politicians and people who care about children to address this issue in their communities.

Many children in Connecticut lack access to dental care, which is a critical component in achieving good overall health. This month in Connecticut, oral health providers in Avon, Bridgeport, East Hartford, Groton, Hartford, Middletown, New Britain, Norwich, Southport, Stamford and Willimantic are expected to provide information and free or reduced cost dental services for about 3,000 underprivileged children.

For more information on either *Children's Dental Health Month*, or *Give Kids A Smile Day*, please visit [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org) or [www.dph.state.ct.us](http://www.dph.state.ct.us).

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