



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Delta Dental Foundation Awards Nearly \$150K in Community Oral Health Grants**

*Thirty-nine North Carolina nonprofits will receive funding to support oral health services and education for nearly 78,000 children*

**RALEIGH, NC:** The Delta Dental Foundation (DDF), the philanthropic arm of Delta Dental of North Carolina (DDNC), recently awarded \$148,728 to 39 North Carolina nonprofits under the Smiles for Kids program. Smiles for Kids helps fund dental education initiatives and programs designed to promote children’s oral health — and this year, nearly 78,000 children will benefit.

“Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease, and [children miss 34 million hours of school every year in the United States due to emergency dental issues](#),” said Curt Ladig, president and CEO of DDNC. “We hope this year’s grants will help provide more access to dental services and education for children who may not otherwise have it, allowing them to show up to school healthy and ready to learn. After all, everyone deserves a healthy smile.”

In North Carolina, [15.3% of kindergarten students already have untreated tooth decay](#). Through the Smiles for Kids program, the DDF strives to educate the public on the importance of preventative oral health care and to help fund initiatives and programs designed to promote children’s oral health. Smiles for Kids supports safety-net dental clinics and North Carolina nonprofits, which provide critical dental services and education to local residents, especially to children in systemically disadvantaged areas.

Since the inception of the program in 2011, the DDF invested more than \$750,000 through the program, which has touched the lives of more than 500,000 children and families in more than half of North Carolina counties. This is the program’s largest year of giving to date, with a 71% increase in giving over 2022, and an expansion into 12 new counties.

To view the full list of this year’s grant recipients, visit: <http://www.deltadentalinc.com/smilesforkids>

### **About Delta Dental of North Carolina**

For more than 50 years, Delta Dental of North Carolina has championed healthy smiles across the state as North Carolina’s leading dental insurer. A member of the Delta Dental Plans Association, DDNC is part of the largest dental insurance network in the nation, covering more than 80 million Americans. DDNC is pleased to provide both dental and vision insurance administered by VSP® Vision Care to businesses as part of their employee benefits, and directly to individuals and families. Our mission is to improve the oral health and the overall well-being of the communities we serve. Learn more about Delta Dental of North Carolina at [www.deltadentalinc.com](http://www.deltadentalinc.com) and DeltaVision® at [www.deltadentalinc.com/deltavision](http://www.deltadentalinc.com/deltavision).

**About the Delta Dental Foundation**

The Delta Dental Foundation (DDF) is a nonprofit, charitable organization established in 1980, which serves as the philanthropic arm of Delta Dental of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and North Carolina. The DDF is dedicated to developing and enhancing partnerships and programs to improve oral and overall health and health equity. For more information, visit [www.deltadental.foundation](http://www.deltadental.foundation).

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