

National “Give Kids A Smile Day” Celebration

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“Give Kids a Smile Day” Celebration

YUBA CITY, CA – The Sutter County Health Department, in conjunction with the Child Health and Disability Prevention Program, and the Sutter County Children and Families Commission will celebrate “Give Kids A Smile Day” on February 6th, Friday, from 1-3 pm at 1445 Veterans Memorial Circle, Yuba City. The local celebration includes fun activities for children, photos with the Tooth Fairy, dental screenings (which meet the kindergarten entry screening requirement) and prizes. The event kicks off Dental Health Month and supports efforts that focus on providing oral health education to all children despite their economic status. “Give Kids A Smile Day” was designed to provide dental education, preventative and restorative care to low-income children who do not have access to these services and is an annual centerpiece to National Children's Dental Health Month. While dentistry is only 5 percent of the health care dollar, dental care is critical. Research shows that tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease, affecting 50 percent of U.S. first graders. Nationally, more than one-half of children ages 6 to 8 have tooth decay, and one-third of it goes untreated. The American Academy of Pediatrics has issued the following recommendations for maintaining oral health in children. In addition to advising regular dental visits, the AAP offers these tips to parents to help ensure good oral health in children:

- Establish good oral health habits early. When your child is 12 months old, you can begin using toothpaste when brushing his or her teeth. However, only use a pea-sized portion on the brush and press it into the bristles so your child won't eat it. And, when the gaps between your child's teeth close, it's important to start flossing.
- Serve as a good role model by practicing good oral health care habits yourself.
- Check your child's mouth for any signs of gum disease, including bleeding gums, swollen and bright red gums, gums that are receding away from the teeth and bad breath.
- Make sure your child consumes a balanced diet. Studies have shown insufficient levels of calcium and vitamin C may make people more susceptible to dental health problems.

For more information contact the Health Education Department Dental Disease Prevention Program at 822-7215.