



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Delta Dental Plans Association
1515 West 22nd Street
Suite 450
Oak Brook, Illinois 60523
Telephone 630-574-6001
Facsimile 630-574-6999

Contacts:
Kate Gerlesits, Delta Dental Plans Association
630-574-6994
kgerlesits@deltadental.com
or
Angela Feig, The Meyocks Group
515-327-3425
angelafeig@meyocks.com

SMILE! To Delta Dental and National Head Start Association, It's Worth \$10,000

OAK BROOK, IL (October 27, 2008) – Delta Dental Plans Association this week launched “The 10,000 Smiles Project” and aims to collect 10,000 photos of people smiling on its unique microsite at www.10000smilesproject.com. When the 10,000th photo is uploaded, Delta Dental Plans Association will donate \$10,000 to the National Head Start Association, its designated philanthropic partner.

“Delta Dental Plans Association created this project as a fun and creative way for people to help us support the National Head Start Association and the young children it serves,” says Tom Dolatowski, marketing vice president at Delta Dental Plans Association.

“As a social media experiment, it takes advantage of the internet to reach out to individuals across the U.S. and encourage them to upload smiling photos of themselves, their children, friends, family, and coworkers,” adds Dolatowski. “And then, we hope, they will forward their personal user page to friends, family, and coworkers, so they will add their photos too and help us reach our 10,000 smile goal.”

Social media, in this case, refers to Delta Dental’s unique microsite where people can share their photos, and stories about those photos, as a community. Social media in a broader context refers to online tools that empower people engage in conversation and contribute to the collaborative process of content creation. Internet forums, weblogs, wikis, and social media applications such as MySpace, Facebook and YouTube are all good examples of social media networks.

The 10,000 Smiles Project builds upon Delta Dental Plans Association’s existing partnership with the National Head Start Association. In 2007, the two organizations formed a special alliance to help improve the oral health of some of the nation’s youngest children at a critical time in their development.

Head Start helps the children of low-income families by providing early childhood development services to promote school readiness. These services, such as dental and health care, immunization,

social services and a focus on parental involvement make Head Start one of the most successful pre-school programs in the country.

Delta Dental Plans Association and its member companies already support Head Start with volunteer efforts, financial donations, tools, and resources including oral health curriculum and education, supplies, screenings, and preventive care.

The not-for-profit Delta Dental Plans Association (www.deltadental.com) based in Oak Brook, Ill., is the leading national network of 39 independent dental service corporations specializing in providing dental benefits programs to 51 million Americans in more than 93,000 employee groups throughout the country.

###