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SCHOOLS PLAY A ROLE IN KEEPING KIDS' MOUTHS HEALTHY, SAY PARENTS

CHICAGO, September 1, 2010—Two-thirds (65%) of parents are looking to schools to help reinforce the importance of oral health, saying it is extremely or very important for schools to teach children about taking care of their teeth, according to a new public opinion survey commissioned by Oral Health America.

“If we want our children to be in school, ready to learn, both parents and schools have a vested interest in working in partnership with dental care providers to teach good habits that will last a lifetime, and keep teeth and mouths healthy,” says Beth Truett, President and CEO, Oral Health America. Tooth decay is the number one chronic childhood disease in the U.S., and children lose over 51 million school hours each year due to dental related illness.¹

According to the survey, children do not report brushing and flossing as often as their parents think they should. In addition, seven in ten parents say they give a brushing reminder on a daily basis, but less than half that number of children (34%) remember hearing their parents give these reminders. Schools are not significantly better at getting the message of dental health across to students. At school, just four in ten (39%) children report learning about oral or dental health in the past year. As they get older, children hear about oral health from both parents and schools less and less. Elementary school students (65%) are far more likely to have received this instruction than middle (36%) and high school (19%) students, despite the fact that 78% of teenagers have experienced tooth decay.²

“Parents should commit to spending just two minutes twice a day with younger children to make sure they are not only brushing and flossing their teeth, but doing it right,” says Truett. “Older children need to know why they should keep their mouths clean and the affects of poor oral health on appearance and employability. Schools can help by integrating mouth health into health and science classes at all grade levels, explaining oral health’s importance to overall health, and demonstrating how plaque affects teeth and gums.”

Oral Health America is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to changing lives by connecting communities with resources to increase access to dental care, education and advocacy. The Fall for Smiles Survey sponsored by Oral Healthcare Can't Wait, Plackers, a leading brand of consumer oral care products, and conducted by Harris Interactive®, was released today to kick-off Fall for Smiles, an initiative promoting the

¹ Office of the U.S. Surgeon General

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

importance of self care, regular dental visits, healthy food choices, and tobacco avoidance as part of maintaining a healthy mouth and body. The survey was conducted on-line within the U.S. by Harris Interactive on behalf of Oral Health America in May and June 2010 among 1,144 U.S. parents and 1,346 U.S. children ages 8-18.

More information about Fall for Smiles: www.oralhealthamerica.org. More information about Oral Healthcare Can't Wait, an initiative of the Dental Trade Alliance: www.oralhealthcarecantwait.com.

About Plackers

Plackers, a leading brand of consumer oral care products, is a pioneer in dental flossers and other consumer oral care products. Having patented the first disposable dental flosser, Plackers is committed to developing high quality, affordable oral care products with innovative features that includes a comprehensive line of dental flossers, dental accessories, and dental night guards including the Grind No More Dental Night Protector. Plackers holds over 20 patents and is sold in major retailers worldwide. For more information, visit <http://www.plackers.com>.

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