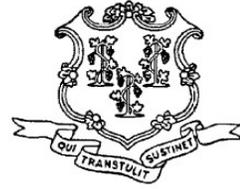


News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CT DPH receives \$60,000 Grant to Assess Oral Disease in Connecticut's Children

*Every Smile Counts Survey to be administered in 78 Elementary Schools
And 20 Head Start Preschool Programs*

HARTFORD -- The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) has been awarded a \$60,000 grant from the Connecticut Health Foundation (CHF) in support of the DPH oral health survey *Every Smile Counts*.

Every Smile Counts is an oral health survey of preschool, kindergarten and third grade students sponsored by DPH and supported by the Connecticut State Department of Education. The purpose of the survey is to determine the need for additional dental programs and interventions, and to describe the oral health of Connecticut's children.

“Nationally, oral disease, specifically dental decay, is five times more common than asthma, and can be prevented,” said DPH Commissioner J. Robert Galvin, MD, MPH. “The *Every Smile Counts* survey enables DPH to determine the extent of oral disease in *Connecticut's* children, and create a plan to combat it. DPH is grateful to the Connecticut Health Foundation for their support of this worthwhile endeavor.”

The survey is conducted in the school setting by trained, licensed and registered dental hygienists. Using a disposable dental mirror or tongue depressor and a penlight, hygienists will be looking for cavities, sealants and determining if children need routine or urgent care.

The CHF grant will go toward training dental hygienists who will serve as screeners, as well as for translation services and dental supplies necessary to complete the assessments. Approximately 20 Head Start preschool programs and 78 elementary schools in every one of Connecticut's eight counties are participating in the survey.

“The randomized sample will be representative of every county in the state, as well as the state as a whole,” said Ardell Wilson, D. D. S., M. P. H., DPH Director of the Office of Public Oral Health.

The Connecticut Health Foundation (CHF) is the state's largest independent, non-profit grant making foundation dedicated to improving the health of the people of Connecticut through systemic change, program innovation and health policy analysis in three priority areas – children's mental health, reducing racial and ethnic health disparities, and oral health.

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