



NEWS RELEASE
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**Fraser and Delta Dental of Minnesota Partner to Create Unique Product
Designed for Children with Special Needs
to Reduce Anxiety Over Visiting Dentist**

CD Helps Children Develop Good Oral Health Habits, Promotes Successful Dental Visits

MINNEAPOLIS (Jan. 23, 2007) – Fraser, a leading Minnesota nonprofit organization, has developed a first-of-its-kind, interactive CD to teach children about good oral health and to ease anxiety of dental visits. The CD, named *My Healthy Smile*, will be launched in February, during Children’s Dental Health Month and will be available throughout the year.

Funded by Delta Dental of Minnesota, *My Healthy Smile* uses computerized social scripts to show children what to expect at dental visits. Social scripts work especially well for children who have developmental disabilities because they familiarize children with situations and help to ease difficult transitions. Some of the topics covered in the scripts include having teeth cleaned, taking X-rays and getting fillings. The CD also includes social scripts about important oral health topics such as losing a tooth, brushing, getting braces and healthy eating. The CD also includes printable tip sheets and storyboards for parents and dental professionals.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 17 percent of American children have some type of developmental disability, including speech and language disorders, learning disabilities, and ADHD. “Children with disabilities often have unique challenges that make dental visits and good oral health habits difficult,” said Christine Bentley, director of The Fraser Institute. “For example, children with autism often have sensory challenges which make touches, smells, sounds and sights uncomfortable or intolerable. This CD is a tool that can be used to overcome some of these barriers to better oral health.”

“Fraser is recognized nationally as a leader in addressing the issues of children with special needs and we’ve been extraordinarily pleased to partner with them on this important project,” said Ann Johnson, director of Community Affairs, Delta Dental of Minnesota. “The step-by-step pictures and stories found in *My Healthy Smile* are a wonderful way to ease anxiety and show children what to expect in a dental setting.”

My Healthy Smile is designed for children developmentally between the ages of 3 and 10. It is especially useful for children with autism or developmental disabilities and is appropriate for any child who has anxiety over visiting the dentist or who is new to the experience. Adults with developmental disabilities may also benefit from the CD.

(more)

Additional Information on *My Healthy Smile*:

- Contains beginner, intermediate and advanced levels
- Compatible for PC and Mac computers
- Online demo available at www.fraser.org/products
- Available for purchase at www.fraser.org/products or by phone at (612) 798-8349
- All proceeds from sales benefit Fraser programs for people with special needs

As part of the introduction of *My Healthy Smile*, Fraser and Delta Dental of Minnesota will be hosting a panel discussion in February. Experts on dental care, autism and other special needs will be present. The public is invited to attend this free event and can find details at www.fraser.org.

About Fraser

Fraser is a Minnesota nonprofit with a nationally renowned reputation, serving children of all abilities and adults with special needs. This multi-faceted human service organization provides direct services, information and support in the areas of education, housing and healthcare. Fraser serves children with developmental disabilities; children who are at risk for abuse and neglect; children with autism or severe emotional and behavioral disorders; families of children with typical needs; and adults with developmental disabilities. For more information, visit www.fraser.org.

A division of Fraser, The Fraser Institute assists people with special needs, their families and the professionals who serve them in accessing resources that may not otherwise be available. Drawing from more than 70 years of experience and expertise, The Fraser Institute researches, develops and delivers innovative services and products including: child care consultation and technical assistance; training and continuing education; and product development, consultation and sales.

About Delta Dental of Minnesota

An innovator in oral health benefit plans, Delta Dental of Minnesota is an independently operated, nonprofit dental services company that administers self-insured and prepaid dental service plans. Delta Dental serves more than 8,200 employer groups with more than 3.1 million members in Minnesota and across the nation. Delta Dental of Minnesota is headquartered in Eagan, and has a customer service center on Minnesota’s Iron Range. For more information about Delta Dental of Minnesota, visit www.deltadentalmn.org.

The Fraser *My Healthy Smile* CD was funded as part of Delta Dental of Minnesota’s overall oral health education, community outreach and philanthropic program, which is focused primarily in the area of oral health education and prevention. Other major initiatives under this program include supporting Children’s Dental Services a nonprofit agency providing accessible dental care through clinic and school-based settings and education to more than 11,000 uninsured and underinsured Minnesota children, and funding Head Start’s Oral Health Risk Assessment program, a grassroots effort to raise awareness on the importance of oral health and oral disease prevention targeting 30,000 Minnesota families.