



Delta Dental of Minnesota

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Dimitri Senaratna

651) 994-5275

[dsenaratna@deltadentalmn.org](mailto:dsenaratna@deltadentalmn.org)

## **Annual Poll Reveals Tooth Fairy's Generosity and Children's Dental Habits**

**April 11, 2007 (EAGAN, Minn.)** – The 2007 Tooth Fairy Poll from Delta Dental of Minnesota (Delta Dental) reports a decrease in the current average “gift” Minnesota children receive from the Tooth Fairy. In Minnesota, children received an average of \$1.46 per tooth, compared to the national average of \$1.71. Tooth Fairy gift amounts ranged from a low of 25 cents to a high of \$25 per tooth.

Both local and national amounts were a drop from the previous year. In 2006, Minnesota children received an average of \$1.81 per tooth compared to a national average of \$2 per tooth.

“The downswing is inconsistent with trends exhibited in other more commonplace indices,” said Marty Weiland, operations analyst for Delta Dental of Minnesota. “The NASDAQ and Down Jones Industrial Average indices have increased 7.6 percent and 3.5 percent over this same time period, respectively. It is worth noting that the substantial downswing was largely driven by a lack of “over-the-top” gifting this year; a gift of \$10 or more was not as prevalent.”

### **Brushing Up**

The poll also revealed that most Minnesota children are working hard to keep their teeth clean. According to Delta Dental's poll, which goes out to a sampling of its commercially insured population, 68 percent of parents report that their children brush their teeth twice per day. Approximately 91 percent of parents surveyed state their children receive a dental exam every six months. Parents also report that children typically have their first visit to the dentist between the ages of one and five.

“While these poll results show positive trends, the American Dental Association recommends that a child be seen by a dentist as soon as his or her first tooth erupts, but at least no later than the first birthday,” said Dr. Richard Hastreiter, vice president of oral

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health analytics and dental director for Delta Dental of Minnesota. “It is important for parents to know that the frequency of dental visits needs to be determined by the dentist, based on an assessment of the child’s unique oral health needs—rather than on a pre-set schedule. This approach ensures your child receives the most appropriate, timely care.”

### **Sweet Tooth**

The poll also revealed that 36 percent of parents indicate that their children consume an average of three or more sugar drinks and/or treats per day. “Children can be taught from an early age to eat an orally healthy and nutritious diet,” says Dr. Hastreiter. “Encourage your children to make healthy choices. Teach them to eat a balanced diet and limit in-between meal snacks of foods containing high levels of sugar, especially sticky foods such as raisins, fruit rolls or candy. This will help promote good dental health as well as overall health.”

Delta Dental of Minnesota’s oral health initiatives are part of its broader non-profit mission to provide educational information and support community programs that help enhance the oral health of all Minnesotans.

### **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](http://www.deltadentalmn.org).

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