



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT IN EAST COUNTY

Dental Sealant and Fluoride Varnish to be Provided Free of Cost to Children without Dental Coverage

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) is co-sponsoring, with the Grossmont Healthcare District, a free dental sealant and fluoride varnish clinic to help protect the dental health of children in the East County area.

More than 300 children are expected to participate in the event, which will take place from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Saturday, April 22 at Grossmont Spring Valley Health Center in Spring Valley.

“This important event is really something to smile about,” said Second District Supervisor Dianne Jacob. “By investing in the dental health of our children, we are improving their self-esteem, reducing pain and suffering and, above all, helping kids stay focused on learning.”

“We recognize children’s dental health as a top priority for preventive care services in East County,” said Dr. John Hardebeck, Board President, Grossmont Healthcare District. “We are pleased to be a part of such a wonderful collaborative effort by the entire community.”

Tooth decay is the most common infectious disease among children, accounting for 5.1 million school hours lost annually in the nation. Recent California data show that over half of all kindergartners and more than 70 percent of third graders have experienced tooth decay, with over 25 percent having untreated dental disease.

Unfortunately, many children do not receive routine dental care and prevention services due to lack of resources. In fact, for every child without medical insurance in this country, it is estimated that over twice as many lack dental insurance.

The clinic activities will be coordinated by the HHSA East County Dental Health Task Force and its collaborative partnerships. More than 40 volunteers, including numerous dental professionals, will provide free dental screening, preventive care and health education for children and their families. The clinic is open to children ages one through 18 who are accompanied by a parent or guardian. Appointments are recommended; call (619) 692-8858 to make an appointment or for more information. Walk-in patients will be seen as space and time permits.

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