

# Delta Dental Community Care Foundation Becomes Title Sponsor of CATCH Healthy Smiles Oral Health Program for Youth

*The K-2 oral health education program will be free to all school in the U.S. and disseminated by CATCH Global Foundation.*

AUSTIN, TX, USA, October 28, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Delta Dental Community Care Foundation (Delta Dental) announced today that they will become the title sponsor of [CATCH Healthy Smiles](#), a national oral health education program for youth in Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades.



Delta Dental's contribution of \$700,000 will go directly toward expanding access to CATCH Healthy Smiles to K-2 students in schools across the U.S. over the next three years by enabling participating schools to access curriculum and educator training for free.

“The best practices-based CATCH Healthy Smiles program is a perfect fit for Delta Dental's mission and one that helps educate children on the importance of the connection between good oral health and overall health,” said Kenzie Ferguson, Vice President of Foundation and Corporate Social Responsibility at Delta Dental of California. “We believe that a healthy smile is the right of every child and through the Foundation's funding wanted to help ensure that the program is free of charge and reaches as many people as possible.”

*Kenzie Ferguson, Delta Dental of California*

CATCH Healthy Smiles was developed by researchers at the Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living, part of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Public Health, with funding support from the National Institutes of Health. A pilot study of CATCH Healthy Smiles showed that 90 percent of students and 95 percent of teachers found

the program enjoyable, engaging, and easy to use.

“Tooth decay is the most common childhood disease, impacting almost 6 out of 10 children across the country and contributing to more than 51 million missed school hours every year,” says Shreela Sharma, PhD, RDN, LD, lead investigator for the program and Professor of Epidemiology at UTHealth School of Public Health. “Oral hygiene is reflective of overall health and wellness where impact can be seen relatively quickly, which is great for kids and schools.”

The CATCH Healthy Smiles program materials and teacher training are provided to schools by [CATCH Global Foundation](#), a UTHealth partner and nonprofit organization dedicated to launching kids toward healthier lifestyles by linking underserved schools to evidence-based programs addressing physical activity, nutrition, Social & Emotional Learning (SEL), vaping prevention, oral health, and more.

Currently, CATCH Global Foundation reaches more than 3 million students in over 15,000 schools annually with health education.

“CATCH has been at the forefront of the movement to help schools value and prioritize teaching kids how to practice healthy behaviors,” says Duncan Van Dusen, CEO of CATCH Global Foundation. “Thanks to the generosity of Delta Dental, we will be able to greatly expand on this movement and our mission to provide kids with access to health education that addresses the Whole Child through physical, mental, and oral health.”

CATCH Global Foundation, Delta Dental, and UTHealth Houston will host a live webinar on November 3rd at 1:00 PM (CDT) to discuss kids’ oral health and the CATCH Healthy Smiles program in greater detail. Webinar registration and overall program information can be found at [catchhealthysmiles.org](http://catchhealthysmiles.org)

To learn more about Delta Dental Community Care Foundation, please visit <https://www1.deltadentalins.com/foundation.html>

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