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Media Contacts:

Jessica Graham
jessica@fionixconsulting.com
704.668.5342

Monika Weymouth
monika@monikaweymouthpr.com
704.222.5935

NEWS ALERT: THE TOOTH FAIRY IS REAL AND SHE IS HERE TO MAKE SURE EVERY CHILD EXPERIENCES HER MAGIC WHEN LOSING A TOOTH!

Ms. Emerald Pine, North Carolina Native & Tooth Fairy, to Appear Throughout the State This Week to Introduce Ways for Parents and Guardians to Affordably Bring the Tooth Fairy into Their Homes

RALEIGH, N.C. – June 27, 2022 – We have official confirmation today that the Tooth Fairy is in fact real, and she is coming to a North Carolina town near you. Emerald Pine, The Tooth Fairy, contacted Delta Dental of North Carolina to help her bring awareness to children who have never heard of or experienced the magic of the Tooth Fairy. She is also sharing resources for parents and guardians who, until now, may have been unable to bring the magic of the Tooth Fairy into their homes for children to experience.

“Delta Dental and Emerald Pine know the impact of losing a tooth and receiving a visit from the tooth fairy, so we are thrilled to be working together to spread the word about the importance of good oral health and how we all can provide children with the surprise and excitement of a visit from the Tooth Fairy,” shared Curt Ladig, president and CEO of Delta Dental of North Carolina. “COVID, and access to basic dental care during that time, had a tremendous negative impact on the oral health of many. Delta Dental’s partnership with the Tooth Fairy will help us revisit the conversation about the importance of oral health, and make educational resources and this childhood tradition more accessible.”

- A [study by Next Smile](#) shows that 65% of North Carolinians delayed visiting their dentist during COVID.
- COVID-19-related closures disproportionately harmed children in poverty, those from low-income families, and racial and ethnic minority groups especially, since they carry the greatest extent and severity of dental disease. These groups already represented the highest proportion of all US children with unmet dental needs, [according to the Journal of the American Dental Association \(JADA\)](#).
- The pandemic led to a higher level of unemployment. Regrettably, employment status in the United States plays a critical role in meeting eligibility requirements to qualify for or [maintain health and dental insurance](#). Without dental insurance, most families are unable to afford out-of-pocket expenses for dental care. [The fear of affordability dissuades parents](#) from taking their children to the dentist, and therefore leaves children without a dental home or with unmet dental needs.
- Research shows poor oral health can contribute to various conditions and diseases, including cardiovascular disease, pregnancy and birth complications, and pneumonia. Signs and symptoms of more than 120 non-dental diseases can be identified through a routine oral health exam.
- The stress of the pandemic has also increased oral health concerns. The [American Dental Association reports](#) an increase in stress-related oral health issues, including an increase in teeth grinding, or Bruxism.

Emerald Pine will make her first appearances on June 28 with the Alliance Center for Education in Charlotte and Smart Start of Forsyth County in Winston-Salem, and on June 29 in Raleigh with The Poe Center.

Ladig said that Emerald Pine plans to continue to visit communities throughout North Carolina and has already booked some larger healthcare events with community partners in the fall. For more information about the Tooth Fairy and helpful oral health resources for parents and children, visit www.deltadentalinc.com/toothfairy.

For more than 50 years, **Delta Dental** of North Carolina has championed healthy smiles across the state as North Carolina's leading dental insurer. A member of the Delta Dental Plans Association, DDNC is part of the largest dental insurance network in the nation, covering more than 80 million Americans. DDNC is pleased to provide both dental and now vision insurance administered by VSP® Vision Care to businesses as part of their employee benefits, and directly to individuals and families. Our mission is to improve the oral health and the overall well-being of the communities we serve. Learn more about Delta Dental of North Carolina at www.deltadentalinc.com and DeltaVision® at www.deltadentalinc.com/deltavision

About Delta Dental of North Carolina - Smile for Kids Program

Through the Smiles for Kids program, the Delta Dental Foundation provides grants to nonprofit organizations throughout North Carolina to help fund dental education initiatives and programs designed to promote children's oral health, especially to those in underserved areas. Since 2010, the Smiles for Kids program has awarded more than \$510,000 to programs across the state, ensuring that more than 330,000 children and their families received access to oral health care or education. Click [here](#) to learn more about how you can be part of the Smile For Kids program.

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