



STATE OF ILLINOIS
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
JAMES R. THOMPSON CENTER, SUITE 15-200
Chicago, Illinois 60601

PAT QUINN
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

September 4, 2007

Dear Oral Health Advocates,

Dental pain and deterioration continue to be real problems for thousands of Illinois residents, despite marked improvements in oral health over the past 50 years. That's why we need your help in making sure everyone has access to decent oral health care – no matter a patient's age or financial standing – during "Healthy Smiles Week."

"Healthy Smiles Week" is an oral health education week where oral health providers and partners across the state offer free and reduced-cost dental services to families in need. One key component to this year's event will be highlighting oral health legislation requiring dental exams for students in Kindergarten, 2nd and 6th grade.

October is National Dental Hygiene Month and Children's Health Month. As Lt. Governor, it is my honor to recognize the week of October 8, 2007 as "Healthy Smiles Week" in Illinois. During this week, I invite you all to lend your expertise and get involved.

The University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry will provide free screening services to school age children. We are also encouraging all Community Health Centers and dental service centers to participate and help make the public aware of new developments in dental health, as well as about the current oral health mandate required of students in Kindergarten, 2nd and 6th grade.

Any organization that has an interest in addressing the oral health needs of low income families should participate. You can get involved by hosting an event at your dental practice or on-site at your organization. Develop media materials and reach out to local legislators to host a press conference to bring awareness to your Healthy Smiles Week activity. Have coloring contests, oral health mascots, as well as a host of activities for the kids. There are many ways to get involved!

Dental disease is an education issue, a public health issue, and an economic issue facing every Illinois citizen. Much more needs to be done to battle this growing epidemic and through "Healthy Smiles Week" we can help improve oral health in Illinois – one child at a time.

Please direct any inquiries and suggestions to LaDawn Burnett in my office at 312-814-3003 or LaDawn.Burnett@illinois.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pat Quinn".

Pat Quinn
Lt. Governor