USC School of Dentistry joins family dental fair

Hundreds of children and their families took advantage of free oral screenings that were provided by the USC School of Dentistry faculty and dental students late last summer.

In addition, the children participated in games, received a free book and visited with the tooth fairy.

Parents preparing their children for the first day of school need to add another box to their checklist of pen-dants, crayons and glue. California legis-lators approved AB 1453 last year. The state law, which took effect in January, now makes a dental check-up part of the health requirements for children entering elementary school in kindergarten or the first grade.

The Fair at the USC School of Dentistry addresses AB 1453 and helps local families establish a den-tal home for their children.

Said Hal Slavkin, Dean of the USC School of Dentistry: “The goal of the legislation and of the on-campus event is to encourage families of young children to establish a dental home and an ongoing relationship with a local dental provider hopefully leading to a founda-tion of lifelong good oral health.”

“We want our community part-ners to realize that we at USC are a resource for the community and can become a dental home for the com-munity children,” he added.

National studies have also found that school age children age five to 17 miss nearly 2 million school days each year nationwide.

“Dental disease, as we know, is a serious health issue in this state and there is growing awareness that it im-pedes a child’s ability to develop and learn,” said Roseann Mulligan, Asso-ciate Dean of USC’s School of Den-tistry Community Health Programs.

The California Dental Association sponsored the bill. Supporters contend it is an important step in target-ing a major but silent epidemic plaguing California’s children.

A study released last year by the Dental Health Foundation found that dental disease outpaces asthma, childhood diabetes and even obesity as the state’s primary health prob-lem affecting children.

Jennifer Holtzman, a USCSD facul-ty member and director of the school’s Neighborhood Mobile Clinic, worked with other members of the CDA in creating the grassroots effort that lead to the CDA championing this effort.

“The program will identify the chil-dren that need more dental treatment and will also identify barriers to re-cieving care,” Holtzman added. “We-need to have data. You can’t work to address a problem without knowing what the extent of the problem is.”

The California law follows simi-lar legislation recently passed in Illi-nois. States such as Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Georgia also have similar laws in place.

Orthodontist raises $100,000 for charities

Project Smile, a charitable giving program sponsored by Atlanta or-thodontist Dr. Robert Pickron of Pickron Orthodontic Care, has just reached a major milestone. In less than two years, the program has raised $100,000 for local charities.

Project Smile turns the frustra-tion and expense of a child’s lost or broken retainer into a reward-ing experience. Instead of paying Pickron Orthodontic Care for the cost of retainer repair or replace-ment, the patient writes a check to support one of five local charita-ble organizations in the Project Smile program. Pickron Ortho-
dontic Care matches all contribu-tions dollar-for-dollar.

Achieving a milestone of his own as well, Dr. Pickron, who created Project Smile, is celebrating 40 years as a prac-ticing orthodontist this year. His compa-ny, Pickron Orthodontic Care, is the largest privately owned orthodontic practice in the United States. It includes 24 offices throughout metro Atlanta.

Dr. Pickron became board certi-fied in orthodontics in 1975. He was hon-ored recently having been twice voted as Gwinnett Magazine’s “Best Dental Practice” and Inside Gwinnett Magazine’s “Best Orthodontist.”

Brody School awarded $295K grant from charitable trust

East Carolina University’s Brody School of Medicine has been award-ed a $295,781 grant from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust to estab-lish a pediatric preventive dental clinic for overweight children with-out access to dental care.

The program will be the first of its kind in the country and will serve as a model for the integration of dental care in pediatric subspecialty care of chil-dren with complex diseases, said Dr. Sara G. Grossi, a periodontist, research professor and director of the grant.

Patients will come from the ECU Pediatric clinic re-sulting in a decrease in the number of urgent problems that require hospitalization or emergency care. The program is designed to detect dental problems and delay more serious complications.

The program will be offered to children who are at risk for diabetes, who have a history of diabetes in their family, or those who have a parent with type 1 diabetes. The program targets children ages 2 to 12 who have a body mass index (BMI) in the overweight or obesity range.

The pediatric preventive dental clinic will collaborate with the re-cently approved ECU School of Den-tistry and will be integral to the educa-tion and training of new general and pediatric dentists and will pro-vide excellent opportunities for inte-grating oral health into the medical curriculum.

Oral or dental infection and in-flammation play an important role in increasing the risk of type 2 dia-betes in overweight children. Higher levels of gingivitis have been detect-ed in children and adolescents with diabetes compared to children of the same age without diabetes.

Bacteria from dental plaque that causes swollen, bleeding gums and gum pockets doesn’t just affect the tooth root but other parts of the body as well and has a significant negative effect in diabetes and the ability to control blood sugar, Grossi said.

An examination of 50 children from the ECU Pediatric clinic re-vealed that 50 percent had untreated dental cavities, 95 percent had gin-givitis, 60 percent had bleeding gums, 19 percent had tartar build-up and 10 percent had juvenile peri-odontitis.

The pediatric preventive dental clinic will collaborate with the re-cently approved ECU School of Den-tistry and will be integral to the educa-tion and training of new general and pediatric dentists and will pro-vide excellent opportunities for inte-grating oral health into the medical curriculum.

Oral or dental infection and in-flammation play an important role in increasing the risk of type 2 dia-betes in overweight children. Higher levels of gingivitis have been detect-ed in children and adolescents with diabetes compared to children of the same age without diabetes.

Bacteria from dental plaque that causes swollen, bleeding gums and gum pockets doesn’t just affect the tooth root but other parts of the body as well and has a significant negative effect in diabetes and the ability to control blood sugar, Grossi said.

An examination of 50 children from the ECU Pediatric clinic re-vealed that 50 percent had untreated dental cavities, 95 percent had gin-givitis, 60 percent had bleeding gums, 19 percent had tartar build-up and 10 percent had juvenile peri-odontitis.

The pediatric preventive dental clinic will collaborate with the re-cently approved ECU School of Den-tistry and will be integral to the educa-tion and training of new general and pediatric dentists and will pro-vide excellent opportunities for inte-grating oral health into the medical curriculum.

Oral or dental infection and in-flammation play an important role in increasing the risk of type 2 dia-betes in overweight children. Higher levels of gingivitis have been detect-ed in children and adolescents with diabetes compared to children of the same age without diabetes.

Bacteria from dental plaque that causes swollen, bleeding gums and gum pockets doesn’t just affect the tooth root but other parts of the body as well and has a significant negative effect in diabetes and the ability to control blood sugar, Grossi said.

An examination of 50 children from the ECU Pediatric clinic re-vealed that 50 percent had untreated dental cavities, 95 percent had gin-givitis, 60 percent had bleeding gums, 19 percent had tartar build-up and 10 percent had juvenile peri-odontitis.