

## **Preventive Dental Program Receives the GlaxoSmithKline Child Health Recognition Award**

**November 7, 2007—Henderson County, NC:** The Preventive Dental Program of the Henderson County Department of Public Health has received the coveted GlaxoSmithKline Child Health Recognition Award for improving the dental health status of children in Henderson County. Diana Rothweiler, Dental Hygienist, received the award September 27, 2007, at the North Carolina Public Health Association's annual meeting in Durham, North Carolina.

"It's wonderful that we have a great program and that we got recognized," said Tom Bridges, Henderson County's Public Health Director. "The Fluoride Varnish Program is a novel way of incorporating nutrition and education in dental oral hygiene and helping parents know more about the importance of good dental care."

Along with the award, the health department will receive a \$5,000 grant to be used in the dental program for special projects, staff development, or educational materials.

The Child Health Recognition Award encourages creative and successful approaches to improve the health status of children and to honor those who contribute to improving the quality of life of children.

The Preventive Dental Program was created in 1999 to provide a unique and comprehensive approach to serving the dental needs of Henderson County's children. The program operates through a grant from Smart Start of Henderson County.

"Because the dental program works to empower parents and children on all levels, it has made great strides in helping parents take on the responsibility of instilling good lifetime dental habits in their children," said Rothweiler. The health department does not have a dental clinic but is still able to provide preventive and restorative dental care through three areas of focus: fluoride varnish, Tooth Time dental education, and dental screening and treatment.

Rothweiler works with the department's WIC program to ensure that children receive fluoride varnish treatments during their regular visits. Tooth Time, a dental health curriculum, is provided to preschool teachers to use in their classrooms. Rothweiler also reinforces Tooth Time lessons with a dental health puppet performance. She provides dental screening to daycare centers and homes for children three to five years old. If a child needs

dental treatment, Rothweiler and a patient-navigator seek appropriate dental care for the child.

If children need dental care, but are not covered by NC Medicaid or Health Choice, they are placed in the Smart Smiles program, which provides dental treatment to children at no cost to the family.

For more information about the Preventive Dental Program, contact Diana Rothweiler at (828) 694-6067 or visit the health department's website at [www.hendersoncountync.org/health](http://www.hendersoncountync.org/health).

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