

Brief Notes

*News for
Brokers and Consultants*

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Applies to: All markets

The Horizon Foundation announces \$500,000 grant program to give children a healthy smile

The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey recently announced the Kids' Oral Health Program, a \$500,000 two-year pilot initiative to improve oral health-related awareness, education, prevention and treatment for young people. The program also includes funding to support professional development for health care providers and promote best practices in 10 New Jersey counties where dental health needs among children are acute.

"The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey is focused on improving the health of New Jersey residents and our Kids' Oral Health Program initiative is going to help improve oral health for young New Jerseyans with a higher level of risk. Cavities and dental decay are among the most common, most preventable and most treatable chronic conditions for kids in the United States. The rate of untreated tooth decay in children and teens from lower-income households is twice that of higher-income families. Early education and intervention can change this and that's what this grant program is all about," said Robert A. Marino, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey Chairman & CEO and Horizon Foundation Chairman.

The Foundation – which is the philanthropic arm of Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey – will award the grants to eligible New Jersey-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations for the two-year period.

"The Kids' Oral Health Program is a great opportunity to help dental professionals serve and help kids most in need. Most oral health diseases can be prevented, but many young people suffer pain and disability because of poor nutrition and lack of access to dentists," said state Senator Jeff Van Drew, who is also a practicing dentist with offices in Pleasantville, NJ. "These grants will help to educate families about the importance of oral health and treat more children."

"The New Jersey Dental Association, representing nearly two-thirds of New Jersey dentists, proudly supports the Kids' Oral Health Program and its objectives to better educate children, their parents and health care practitioners on the importance of good oral health," said Dr. Gregory LaMorte, DDS, President of the New Jersey Dental Association.

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“Dental disease is the most common childhood disease in America, yet is largely preventable. Routine dental hygiene, regular dental visits, fluoride treatments and dental health awareness are critical factors for healthier children. We look forward to working with The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey in improving oral health in our state.”

For more information about our Kids’ Oral Health Program eligibility, background, timeline, areas of focus and a list of counties to be served, or to access a grant application, go to **HorizonBlue.com/kidsoralhealth**.