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DELTA DENTAL HEALTH THEATRE TO CELEBRATE ITS GRAND RE-OPENING WITH "KINGDOM OF HEALTHY SMILES" FAMILY FUN DAY

ST. LOUIS, MO., July 8, 2011...The newly reconstructed Delta Dental Health Theatre (DDHT), located on Laclede's Landing at 727 North First Street, will officially open its doors to the public on Aug. 6 – and it's commemorating the occasion by hosting a day of FREE family fun. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., families region-wide are invited to check out the renovated theatre and its new offerings, and make their way down to the grassy lot at the corner of First and Lucas Streets for a special medieval-themed outdoor festival.

The FREE *Kingdom of Healthy Smiles* Family Fun Day will feature a host of activities for kids of all ages. The event will kick-off with a parade featuring DDHT's unique cast of characters and other kid favorites, including Dora the Explorer, SpongeBob SquarePants, Buzz Lightyear and Elmo. On the festival grounds, kids will find a variety of games, as well as a castle bounce house, face painting, a balloon artist, a pirate juggler, numerous educational displays and the chance to take their own photos with the various characters. The first 500 kids under 12 will also receive free tickets for a future visit to the DDHT, a tote bag and other giveaways.

A full lineup of stage performances will entertain crowds throughout the day. Among those taking the stage will be finalists from the Street Dreamz "Livin' the Dream" 2011 Talent Contest, which got underway in mid-June. Finalists will be performing song and dance routines live, before judges award one talented St. Louisan with a grand prize recording studio package from the Street Dreamz Development Center at The St. Louis Mills Mall, valued at \$2,000.

The Family Fun Day festivities will mark the grand re-opening of the DDHT following the completion of \$145,000 in renovations, which were designed to make more efficient use of available space and add to the theatre's interactive offerings in an effort to further promote the theatre's expanded oral health and overall health mission.

"We are very excited about the theatre's new interactive offerings and how they will help better enable us to teach children about how their dental health and overall health go hand in hand," said Shannon Woodcock, executive director of the Delta Dental Health Theatre. "Our *Kingdom of Smiles* Family Fun Day provides us with a perfect opportunity to unveil all these exciting changes to the public, while providing area families with a full-day of free, family fun that encourages active play and healthy lifestyles."

The newly renovated theatre will be open for tours throughout the day on Aug. 6, giving area residents the chance to explore the new interactive play exhibits and the expanded resources available in the theatre's Cardinals Care Healthy Library, and to get a glimpse of the oversized teeth surrounding the stage's perimeter that remain a focal point in the renovated space.

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**Delta Dental Health Theatre to host Family Fun Day event
First and Final Add**

“This is a very thrilling time for the Delta Dental Health Theatre, and we are looking forward to a bright future in our newly renovated venue,” noted Woodcock. “As we continue our work to educate area children about the link between dental health and overall health, we are extremely grateful for the ongoing support of our primary, permanent corporate sponsor, Delta Dental of Missouri. We also encourage others who may be interested in supporting our efforts to get involved today.”

Event attendees are being encouraged to bring canned food items which will be collected throughout the duration of the day on Aug. 6 in support of Operation Food Search.

The Delta Dental Health Theatre opened its doors in 1977 and continues to offer a unique blend of fun entertainment and education to promote healthy life choices. More than 10,000 children visit the theatre annually, underscoring the important role it plays in educating area youth.

To learn more about the Delta Dental Health Theatre, the theatre’s FREE *Kingdom of Healthy Smiles* Family Fun Day, or other upcoming events, call 314-241-7391 or visit www.ddhtstl.org.

The Delta Dental Health Theatre was originally organized as a program under the Foundation of the Greater St. Louis Dental Society in 1977. In 2002, it was incorporated as an independent 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization. Six years ago, Delta Dental of Missouri became a major corporate sponsor supporting the theatre’s mission to improve the overall oral health and healthy habits of children and families. The theatre is located on Laclede’s Landing in the same building as the Old Spaghetti Factory.

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