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Leaders, health care experts celebrate 25th anniversary of Healthy Kids Dental

MDHHS, Delta Dental and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan mark quarter century of program providing dental care for low-income Michigan kids

[A recording of the virtual press conference is available online.](#)

LANSING – The **Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)**, **Delta Dental of Michigan** and **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (Blue Cross)** celebrated the 25th anniversary of Healthy Kids Dental at a [virtual press conference today](#).

For 25 years, [Michigan's Healthy Kids Dental program](#) has helped improve the oral health of millions of children across the state and increases accessibility to quality oral care. With consistent oral care, hundreds of thousands of Michigan children experience less tooth decay, healthier smiles and better overall health.

“Healthy Kids Dental isn’t just about oral health – it’s about giving kids the solid foundation they need to thrive,” said MDHHS Director **Elizabeth Hertel**. “Reaching the 25th anniversary of this critical program is an incredible milestone. Nearly one million children are enrolled in the program – that’s nearly a million young lives with better chances for pain-free days in school, improved self-confidence and stronger futures.”

In Michigan, Healthy Kids Dental is available at no cost to children who have Medicaid and are under the age of 21. It offers critical services like dental exams, cleanings, X-rays and treatments that

prevent small issues from becoming serious health risks.

“Since 2000, the Healthy Kids Dental program has helped provide quality dental care to Medicaid-recipient children who might otherwise struggle to access the oral care they need,” said **Meghan Groen**, chief deputy director of health services for MDHHS. “The program continues to embrace innovative ideas and approaches, and it consistently makes a difference in the lives of millions of Michigan children.”

Healthy Kids Dental currently operates under a carve-out structure, which allows state funds to flow directly from MDHHS to the Dental Health Plans that administer Healthy Kids Dental for Michigan’s low-income children. Michigan continues to strive for administrative efficiency so providers aren’t spending time filling out unnecessary paperwork and can devote their time to giving kids the care they need for healthy teeth and gums.

“Delta Dental is proud to be a partner in Healthy Kids Dental, and we are honored to be part of the team successfully administering the program since its inception,” said **Goran Jurkovic**, president and CEO at Delta Dental of Michigan.

Healthy Kids Dental is available in all of Michigan’s 83 counties. Currently, more than 3,500 dentists participate. By ensuring a broad network of providers, the program meets families where they are and provides dental access to children across the state.

“As one of the programs administrators, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan is dedicated to increasing access to affordable, quality dental care to children in Michigan’s underserved communities,” said **Christina Luna**, vice president of specialty benefits at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. “Establishing healthy oral habits at a young age is important for maintaining overall health, and Healthy Kids Dental makes this possible for thousands of families in our state.”

To learn more about Healthy Kids Dental, please visit the [MDHHS website](#).



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