



For Release

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### **SCHOOLS PLAY A ROLE IN KEEPING KIDS' MOUTHS HEALTHY, SAY HISPANIC PARENTS**

CHICAGO, September 7, 2010—Almost three out of four Hispanic parents (72%) are looking to schools to reinforce messages about the importance of oral health, saying it is extremely or very important for schools to teach children about taking care of their teeth, according to a new public opinion survey commissioned by Oral Health America.

“If we want our children to be in school, ready to learn, both parents and schools have a vested interest in working together with dental care providers to teach good habits that will last a lifetime and keep mouths healthy,” said Beth Truett, President and CEO, Oral Health America. Tooth decay is the number one chronic childhood disease in the U.S., and children lose over 51 million school hours each year due to dental related illness.<sup>1</sup>

According to the survey, Hispanic parents remain committed to oral health, and a majority (82%) believe that taking children to the dentist is an important part of getting ready to go back to school. But are children getting the message? Seven in ten parents say they give a brushing reminder on a daily basis, but less than half of children (34%) remember hearing their parents give these daily reminders. At school, just four in ten (39%) children report learning about oral or dental health in the past year.

“Parents should commit to spending just two minutes twice a day with younger children to make sure they are not only brushing and flossing their teeth, but doing it right,” says Yolanda Bonta, DMD, MS, MS, Executive Director, Hispanic Dental Association. “Schools can help by integrating mouth health into health and science classes at all grade levels.”

The public opinion survey was released to kick-off Fall for Smiles, promoting the importance of self care, regular dental visits, healthy food choices, and tobacco avoidance as part of oral and overall health. The survey was sponsored by Oral Healthcare Can't Wait and Plackers, a leading brand of consumer oral care products, and was conducted on-line within the U.S. by Harris Interactive for Oral Health America in May and June 2010 among 1,144 U.S. parents and 1,346 U.S. children ages 8-18.

Oral Health America is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to changing lives by connecting communities with resources to increase access to care, education and advocacy. More information about Fall for Smiles: [www.oralhealthamerica.org](http://www.oralhealthamerica.org). More

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<sup>1</sup> Office of the U.S. Surgeon General

information about Oral Healthcare Can't Wait: [www.oralhealthcarecantwait.com](http://www.oralhealthcarecantwait.com). More information about the Hispanic Dental Association: [www.hdassoc.org](http://www.hdassoc.org).

## About Plackers

Plackers, a leading brand of consumer oral care products, is a pioneer in dental flossers and other consumer oral care products. Having patented the first disposable dental flosser, Plackers is committed to developing high quality, affordable oral care products. Plackers holds over 20 patents and is sold in major retailers worldwide. For more information, visit <http://www.plackers.com>.

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