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Local “Give Kids a Smile” Event Highlights Underserved Children’s Need for Dental Care

Garden City NY - On Feb 5, 2016, an estimated 1600 children ages 4-7 from local low-income families will receive free dental services –dental screenings and fluoride varnish treatments as part of national *Give Kids A Smile Day* taking place at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Garden City for the 13th consecutive year. The children will be treated to a dental puppet show and a dental video on good oral health. Each child will receive a back pack filled with a toothbrush, toothpaste, coloring book, crayons, and a certificate for a complimentary **Happy Meal from Long Island McDonald’s®**. And the children will be entertained by **Ronald McDonald®** from 9:30 am to 11:30 a.m.

Schools from the towns of Westbury, Baldwin, Hempstead, Uniondale, Baldwin, and Roosevelt, Lawrence were contacted by the Nassau County Dental Society and asked to attend the event.

Last year, more than 44,650 dental team members nationwide participated in *Give Kids A Smile*, a program first held in 2003 by the *American Dental Association* (ADA) to provide care and raise awareness of the importance of access to dental care for poor children.

“It’s heartbreaking to see a child’s smile destroyed by severe tooth decay.” said Joseph Brofsky DMD co-chairperson of *Nassau County Dental Society’s, Give Kids A Smile Day*. “Imagine not being able to eat, sleep and pay attention in school because you have a mouthful of toothaches.” Dr. Joseph Brofsky said. “Some children have reached the point where the only alternative is a mouth full of crowns or pulling the teeth that can’t be saved. It’s tragic. Our state needs to do more to help children get the dental care they need.”

Nearly 1 in 4 children, aged 2 to 11 years, has untreated cavities in their baby teeth, according to the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC). While poor diet and oral hygiene certainly play a role, cavities are actually caused by a disease called caries, which is five time more common than asthma.

On Feb 5, 2016 with the help of over 350 volunteers these young children will have a great dental experience. We hope you can volunteer to help this event become another successful *Give Kids A Smile Day*.