



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 3, 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Michelle Sanford, (800) 342-8747

**Mobile Dental Van Celebrates
Six-Month Anniversary With the
Gift of Healthy Smiles**

Some people celebrate an anniversary by receiving gifts. The Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) van recently celebrated an anniversary by giving gifts...694 to be exact.

August 2007 marked the six-month anniversary of the MAC van's official launch. Since February 2007, the van has provided a total of 694 children with nearly \$200,000 worth of free dental treatment.

"In its first six months of operation, the MAC van has been an unqualified success," exclaims Dr. Andrea Richman, president of the Massachusetts Dental Society. "It's wonderful how the dental community has come together to provide hundreds of underprivileged children with much needed dental care, all free of charge."

The MDS Foundation acquired the van through a \$250,000 grant from Procter & Gamble. The mobile dental unit has been traveling to communities throughout Massachusetts with the greatest oral health needs, providing free dental screenings and treatment to low-income children. Each child seen on the van also receives a dental "goody bag" that contains oral health educational materials, toothpaste, and a toothbrush. The van's staff includes a full-time dentist and dental assistant, as well as MDS volunteer dentists and their hygienists and assistants.

“I am very proud to see one of the visions of the MDS Foundation come to fruition,” says Dr. Richard LoGuercio, chair of the MDS Foundation. “Observing the appreciative smiles on the faces of these children is particularly gratifying.”

During its six months of service, the need for the MAC van has been most realized during conversations that have occurred between dental staff and children receiving treatment. Past statements from these children have included:

- “Can I have an extra toothbrush for my sister so we don’t have to share with my mom?”
- “I don’t like to smile. My teeth aren’t very pretty.”
- “I’ve never been to the dentist, so I don’t have a toothbrush.”

The van partners with organizations that serve children from low-income families, including Boys and Girls Clubs, Head Start locations, YMCAs, and selected schools.

In addition to Procter & Gamble, the MAC van has received funding from Dental Services of Massachusetts, First Fed Charitable Foundation, the University of Massachusetts—Worcester, Gentle Dental Associates, MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation, and the Foundation of the Pierre Fauchard Academy.

For more information on the MAC van, contact Ellen Factor, MDS manager of district member services, at **(800) 342-8747**, extension 228, or **efactor@massdental.org**. And for the latest updates on where the van is scheduled to visit, log onto **www.massdental.org**.

###