

Access

Summer 2011

- 2 MonthlyMouthfulCO.com – A Resource for Employers and Employees
- 3 Delta Dental Dunks for Dollars
- 4 Delta Dental Plans Association Ranks No. 1

Wellness Matters

Over the past five years, more employers have come to understand the importance of promoting wellness in their workplace.¹ Among American businesses with 50 or more employees, the prevalence of some form of health promotion program has reached 81%.²

Whether your company already has a wellness program or is considering one, oral health should be a key component – because good oral health is about much more than a sparkling smile. **Oral health plays a vital role in maintaining general health and overall well being.**

A lack of dental care and untreated oral disease can negatively affect an individual's ability to do basic things like speaking, smiling, kissing and chewing. In fact, national statistics show dental-related absences from work for one year totaled more than 164 million work hours for adults.³

In addition, science points to important associations between periodontal (gum) disease and medical conditions like diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and the risk for premature birth.⁴ The most common oral diseases – tooth decay and gum disease – can be prevented or eliminated almost completely if individuals have some basic knowledge on good oral health habits.

Efforts to encourage preventive oral health behaviors should be essential components of any wellness program.

Choosing and implementing a wellness program for your employees starts with understanding your employees' specific oral health needs.

Groups with mainly younger employees (those in their 20s and 30s) generally face fewer oral health challenges. This age group benefits most from prevention. They also expect easy online access to benefits information.

[continued on page 2](#)



Delta Dental offers
wellness resources!

www.monthlymouthfulco.com

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Groups mainly comprised of established employees – those ages 40-59 – are more likely to need restorative procedures. They tend to seek a better understanding of their oral health through access to credible resources. They are willing to pay for the best possible care and expect to have a choice in who provides it.

Near-retirement employees in their 60s and even 70s are more likely to have a chronic condition. They may not be aware of the importance of regular exams. While some employees in this age group may consider their oral health beyond repair, this is a misnomer that can be corrected with education.

Good oral health can contribute in numerous ways to overall well-being. Integrating prevention-focused oral health initiatives into your wellness program demonstrates your company's commitment to the total health of your employees.

1. National Institute for Health Care Reform. "Growing employer demand for Wellness Programs," Research Brief, July 2010.
2. Wellness Councils of America, "Building a Well Workplace," <http://www.welcoa.org/wellworkplace/index.php?cat1=&page=1>, accessed March 24, 2011.
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Call to Action to Promote Oral Health, NIH Publication No 03-5303, Spring 2003.
4. University of Maryland Medical Center, Periodontal disease – Risk Factors, January 2008.

MonthlyMouthfulCO.com –
a Resource for Employers, Employees

Employers – Did you know there's a wealth of oral health information right at your fingertips? That's right - Delta Dental can make your job easier! Encourage your employees to visit www.monthlymouthfulco.com. Here, they will have access to various oral health and wellness resources.

- Oral health and pregnancy
- Mouth friendly recipes
- Oral health in all stages of childhood

There's also a whole section just for you – the plan administrator. Look in the Employer Resources section for educational materials that are available to download and print out – at no charge to you! Help your employees take control of their oral health.

Access Newsletter Survey Results

We recently sent a survey to gauge the current success of the Access newsletter and find out what we can do better. After reviewing responses from more than 50 plan administrators, here's a recap of what we learned:

- 94% said they read Access most or all of the time
- 43% prefer to receive the newsletter in hardcopy format
- 57% prefer to receive it via e-mail
- 68% prefer monthly email blast in lieu of a formal newsletter
- 45% of respondents serve as the human resources manager; 33% plan administrator
- Important topics to include are benefits information, oral/systemic health connection and Delta Dental in the community

Thank you to everyone who responded, including our 10, \$100 gift card winners:

Christine Lewman	Veronica Chavez
Sara Walter	Scott McGraw
Cari Deslatte	Penny Bacon
Matt Collier	Janet Guizzetti
Karen Andrews	Karen Kupilik

We are currently analyzing the survey results and looking for ways to make improvements to our publications.

National Oral Health Conference



The Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation's *Healthy Teeth Happy Babies* public health education committee recently returned from the National Oral Health Conference (NOHC) in Pittsburgh, PA. Colorado was well-represented at the conference. All indicators show that we're building a reputation for innovation and success in oral health public service campaigns.

Healthy Teeth Happy Babies was selected for two sessions at the

NOHC. The campaign committee also participated in three days of dialogue on the status of our nation's oral health. On the first day of the conference, the campaign committee facilitated discussions about engaging the Hispanic audience through community-based social marketing. The committee received excellent input from the Hispanic Dental Association. The roundtable discussion was also a good place for representatives of new multi-cultural programs to ask questions about established communications tactics.

The final day of the NOHC included presentations by Dr. Patti Braun from Cavity Free at Three and Colleen Rauscher from *Healthy Teeth Happy Babies*. The combination of these two presentations effectively showcased Colorado's multi-layered approach to eradicating early childhood tooth decay. The concept of community-based public education integrated with clinical initiatives resonated very well with NOHC participants.

Why not get involved with this movement? It's growing stronger everyday! With resources for providers, parents and Spanish speakers, the *Healthy Teeth Happy Babies* website is a terrific place to start. To learn more, visit: www.HealthyTeethHappyBabies.com.



Delta Dental Dunks for Dollars

Delta Dental and the Denver Nuggets entered into a sponsorship agreement for the 2010-11 season. The sponsorship included a program called Delta Dental Dunks for Dollars. For every Nuggets slam dunk in the season, Delta Dental pledged \$100 to the Kroenke Sports Charities. In all, Delta Dental donated \$25,000 to the organization.

On April 9th, Delta Dental's Communications Manager, Lisa Konen attended the Nuggets game, presenting the \$25,000 check to Kroenke Sports representatives at halftime.

"We're pleased to partner with Kroenke Sports Charities in an effort to provide opportunities for the kids of Denver and surrounding areas," said Konen.

Business Insurance Directory Ranks Top Dental Plan Providers

The Delta Dental Plans Association ranks No. 1 according to Business Insurance's 2011 directory and ranking of the largest dental plan providers.

Oak Brook, Ill.-based Delta Dental remains the largest provider of dental plans, with 54 million plan participants in 2010—unchanged from the previous year—according to the annual ranking of the top 10 dental plan providers.

MetLife Inc. remains the No. 2 dental plan provider in the newest ranking, though the New York-based provider saw nearly a 1.4% decline of total participants compared with last year.

Aetna Inc., CIGNA Corp. and United Concordia Cos. Inc. rounded out the five largest dental plan providers, according to the Business Insurance ranking.

While their rankings remained the same from the previous year, CIGNA and United Concordia saw modest increases in the number of plan participants while Aetna number decreased slightly.

To view the ranking or to purchase copies of the 2011 Directory of Dental Plan Providers, go to www.BusinessInsurance.com/research.

SOURCE: deltadental.com



We Value Your Opinion This newsletter is meant to be an informative and useful publication for brokers and plan administrators. E-mail your ideas, suggestions and comments to the Delta Dental of Colorado editorial team at accessnewsletter@ddpco.com.



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