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**Champaign-Urbana Public Health District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## ***Fall for Smiles Kicks Off with Free Apples***

### ***Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Helps Promote Oral Healthcare for Children***

Champaign, IL – The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) and its Dental Clinic are showing support for the mission and efforts of Oral Health America by participating in *Fall for Smiles*, a public messaging campaign conducted in collaboration with Oral Healthcare Can't Wait®, an initiative of the Dental Trade Alliance.

The *Fall for Smiles* campaign focuses on four specific messages:

- Brushing and flossing teeth as part of a healthy daily routine
- Maintaining regular visits to the dentist
- Choosing healthy foods for a nutritious diet and healthy mouth
- Avoiding all tobacco products

Through the month of September, CUPHD is offering free apples and healthy smile information on Thursday afternoons from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM at 201 West Kenyon Road in Champaign. “An estimated 51 million school hours per year are lost because of dental-related illness,” says Kara Ruffatto, DMD, a CUPHD dentist. According to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, “Early tooth loss caused by dental decay can result in failure to thrive, impaired speech development, absence from and inability to concentrate in school, and reduced self-esteem.” Parents should support a healthy mouth for their child by seeing the dentist twice each year, helping their child brush at least twice daily, flossing everyday, offering healthy foods like fruit and vegetables, and teaching their children about the dangers of tobacco use.

The CUPHD Children's Dental Clinic provides treatment for children ages one to 18 who live in Champaign or Urbana and have healthcare coverage through All Kids or Medicaid.

Children enrolled in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 6<sup>th</sup> grade in the Champaign-Urbana school district can receive dental care at their school by CUPHD dentists and dental hygienists. Children enrolled in the Urbana school district may also visit CUPHD's Dental Clinic located in the Urbana School Health Center (USHC) at Urbana High School, 1002 South Race Street.

For more information about dental care and programs, contact CUPHD at (217) 531-4279 or USHC at (217) 239-4220. Visit CUPHD on the web at [www.c-uphd.org](http://www.c-uphd.org).

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