



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CELEBRATES NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH IN THE CLASSROOM**

*~ Proper, licensed dental care keys to health ~*

**TALLAHASSEE-** February is National Children's Dental Health Month and the Florida Department of Health (DOH) in Pasco County (CHD) is working to educate Floridians about the importance of preventative dental care from licensed professionals. The Department's Unlicensed Activity (ULA) Unit, along with the Pasco County share important information with school aged children about obtaining proper dental care from licensed health care practitioners.

Unlicensed health care practitioners pose a threat to both the law and individuals' health. Floridians are encouraged to verify licensure when seeking dental care needs.

Over the past four years, the DOH ULA received 209 reports about unlicensed health care practitioners. These unlicensed individuals pose as dentists, physicians, pharmacists, nurses and more, using unsterilized equipment and have improper training to conduct illegal procedures. The con artists prey on individuals seeking affordable dental care; however, taking this illegal route can lead to infections, disfigurement, scarring, paralysis, brain damage and even death.

The CHD dental health program will volunteer with Give Kids a Smile in February, and students will receive dental care information. The Pasco County Health Department provides many services including exams, cleanings, fluoride varnish, fillings, sealants, X-rays and more to children aged one to 20.

Every Floridian can play a part in making Florida a healthier state. To report unlicensed practice of dentistry, call the ULA hotline at 1-877-HALT-ULA (1-877-425-8852) or visit the ULA web page at [www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/unlicensed/unlic\\_home.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/unlicensed/unlic_home.html). If confirmed, a violation can result in a fine of \$5,000 per incident and a third degree felony.

DOH protects, promotes and improves the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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