

## Captain Supertooth Rides Again!

What superhero sports a gleaming grin, vanquishes plaque and tooth decay with a five-foot toothbrush and visits dozens of New Jersey schools every February during National Children's Dental Health Month?

It's Delta Dental's own Captain Supertooth!

Captain Supertooth, whose mission is to teach schoolchildren about the benefits of good oral hygiene, will visit 50 schools this January and February to demonstrate how brushing, flossing, eating healthy foods and regular dental visits can defeat tooth decay and other dental foes.

The interactive Captain Supertooth presentation invites kids to become involved participants. Some help Captain

Supertooth as his assistant, or become plaque- and germ-covered "teeth" that need to be brushed and flossed. Captain Supertooth rallies everyone to shout out answers to his oral-care questions and join him in singing the "Captain Supertooth Song."



The 20-minute program has garnered giggles and enthusiasm from young audiences across New Jersey. Delta Dental offers the program free to schools in New Jersey. Since 1990, more than 35,000 children have attended Captain Supertooth programs.

Because of high demand, teachers and school nurses in New Jersey should call (973) 285-4059 or e-mail us at [jappaluccio@deltadentalnj.com](mailto:jappaluccio@deltadentalnj.com) to place their school on the waiting list for next year. Although Captain Supertooth programs are completely booked for this year, you can still share Captain Supertooth's message with students through the Captain Supertooth video, available free by contacting this same number or e-mail address.

## Books to Help Celebrate National Children's Dental Health Month

February marks the 53rd anniversary of National Children's Dental Health Month, a nationwide program sponsored by the American Dental Association to promote healthy smiles for children. Some good books to help students learn about and celebrate good oral health include:

- *Arthur's Tooth* by Marc Brown. One of the best-selling *Arthur* series of books. Arthur becomes worried when everyone in his class has lost their baby teeth except him.
- *Open Wide: Tooth School Inside* by Laurie Keller. This book combines lessons in oral hygiene with a wacky tale in which the main characters are all teeth—students in Dr. Flossman's classroom.
- *Throw Your Tooth on the Roof: Tooth Traditions from Around the World* by Selby B. Beeler, illustrated by G. Brian Karas. The Tooth Fairy isn't the only creature that collects

(continued on page 2)

### In This Issue...

- Unseen Danger for Survivor Contestants: Periodontal Disease . . . 2
- ADA Tips for Handling Dental Emergencies . . . . . 3
- Delta Dental Launches Web Site Improvements. . . . . 4



**Special Olympics**

New Jersey

Premier Sponsor

## Unseen Danger for Survivor Contestants: Periodontal Disease

If you're thinking about answering CBS' call for contestants for the fourth installment of *Survivor*, here's something to consider: neglected oral hygiene can quickly put the survival of your teeth in jeopardy, according to the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP). It can also increase the risk that an infection in your mouth could spread and put other parts of your body in peril.

A *Journal of Periodontology* study indicates that it doesn't take long for the effects of poor oral hygiene to start causing damage. The *Journal* followed a group of 15 third-year dental students who gave up oral hygiene activities for 21 days to monitor the effects on their oral health. By day 21, all subjects exhibited signs of gingivitis, including plaque and overt clinical inflammation. The toxins produced by gingival infections can destroy the supporting tissues around the teeth, forming pockets that will fill with even more plaque and infection. As the disease progresses, these pockets deepen, more gum tissue and bone are destroyed and the teeth eventually become loose.

In addition to being a major cause of tooth loss, periodontal disease has been linked to serious health threats such as diabetes and pre-term births.

"While most people don't have to worry about not being able to brush their teeth for several days, they should understand that plaque, when not removed, can harden to the point it can

only be removed during a professional cleaning after only a



Michael McGuire, D.D.S., past president of the AAP. "When people don't floss daily, plaque builds between the teeth, and periodontal disease often begins between teeth where a toothbrush can't reach."

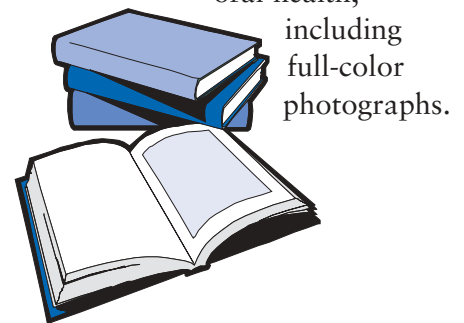
Periodontists specialize in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting the gums and supporting structures of the teeth and in the placement and maintenance of dental implants.

## Books to Help Celebrate Dental Health Month

(continued from page 1)

lost baby teeth. In Venezuela, a mouse takes the tooth and leaves money under the pillow. The book takes a humorous look at lost-tooth traditions worldwide.

- *Tooth Decay and Cavities (My Health)* by Dr. Alvin Silverstein, Virginia B. Silverstein and Laura Silvers Nunn. A comprehensive book written for elementary school students about the science of



oral health, including full-color photographs.

## Dental Health Curriculum Resources

Looking for other ideas to help you teach oral hygiene to young students? You can find a lot of free material at the following Web sites:

- [www.deltadentalnj.com](http://www.deltadentalnj.com) (Delta Dental)
- [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org) (American Dental Association)
- [www.adha.org](http://www.adha.org) (American Dental Hygienists' Association)
- [www.aapd.org](http://www.aapd.org) (American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry)
- [www.perio.org](http://www.perio.org) (American Academy of Periodontology)

Another resource is the book *Dental Health Education: Lesson Planning & Implementation* by Lori Galiardi. The text combines general dental health information and lesson plans for the elementary school classroom. It also includes visual aids and tips on integrating dental health into the academic curriculum. The book is available through Amazon for \$29.33; used copies are often available for less.

# ADA Tips for Handling Dental Emergencies

## ***Toothache***

- ✗ Don't place aspirin on the aching tooth or gum tissues
- ✗ Rinse mouth with warm water
- ✗ Floss to make sure no food or foreign object is lodged around tooth
- ✗ Contact dentist as soon as possible

## ***Knocked-Out Tooth***

- ✗ Retrieve tooth
- ✗ If tooth is dirty, hold by the crown, and carefully rinse off its root. (Don't scrub tooth or remove any attached tissue fragments.)
- ✗ If possible, put tooth back in its socket. If not, put in a container with milk or cool water.
- ✗ Contact dentist immediately

## ***Broken Tooth***

- ✗ Rinse mouth with warm water to keep area clean
- ✗ Use cold compresses to keep down swelling
- ✗ Contact dentist immediately

## ***Bitten Tongue or Lip***

- ✗ Apply direct pressure to bleeding area with a clean cloth
- ✗ Use cold compresses to keep down swelling
- ✗ If bleeding doesn't stop, contact dentist immediately or go to a hospital emergency room

## ***Objects Caught Between Teeth***

- ✗ Gently try removing object with dental floss. Do not use anything sharp. Be careful not to cut the gums.
- ✗ Contact dentist if you can't remove object

## ***Problems With Braces and Retainers***

### ***If a wire causes irritation:***

- ✗ Cover the end with a small cotton ball, beeswax or piece of gauze
- ✗ Contact dentist

### ***If a wire gets stuck in the cheek, tongue or gum tissue:***

- ✗ Do not attempt to remove it
- ✗ Contact dentist immediately

### ***If an appliance becomes loose or a piece of it breaks off:***

- ✗ Collect all pieces of appliance
- ✗ Contact dentist

## Delta Dental Launches Web Site Improvements

**D**id you know that Americans purchase about 3 million miles of dental floss each year—enough to go to the moon and back six times? This tidbit is included in the new “Dental Trivia” feature, now available on Delta Dental’s redesigned Web site at [www.deltadentalnj.com](http://www.deltadentalnj.com).

The redesigned site makes it easier than ever to find the information you need.

Click on “Kid’s Club” icon at the bottom of the Home Page screen to connect to a wealth of information, including:



- ◆ Past and current issues of *Wisdom Tooth*
- ◆ Cartoons and downloadable coloring book pages
- ◆ Plaque Attack Game
- ◆ Details about the Captain Supertooth program
- ◆ Dental Trivia (updated

monthly with new and interesting facts about dentistry and teeth)

Another helpful feature on our Web site includes the Glossary (on the left-hand navigation bar), where you can find the definition for many dental terms

from *amalgam* to *x-ray*. (Another comprehensive source of Glossary information is located at the American Dental Association Web site, at [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org). Click “The Public” and then “A-Z List” on the left-hand navigation bar.)

### Sign Our Guestbook for Regular Updates

**D**elta Dental can deliver information on a variety of subjects right to your e-mail inbox! To sign up for this service, just visit our Web site at [www.deltadentalnj.com](http://www.deltadentalnj.com), and click on “Guestbook” on the left side of the Home Page screen. You can request immediate information on topics such as:

- ▲ Oral hygiene and dental health
- ▲ Captain Supertooth

You can also request periodic updates on the topics you selected, which will arrive right to your e-mail inbox. It’s the easiest way to stay up to date about what’s happening at Delta Dental that interests you!

*Please note: We do not sell, rent, or disclose your e-mail address to third parties. Therefore, you will not receive unsolicited e-mail (“spam”) as a result of signing our Guestbook.*



Delta Dental Plan of New Jersey, Inc.

1639 Route 10  
Parsippany, NJ 07054-0222

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
W. CALDWELL, NJ  
PERMIT NO. 111