



Small Smiles of South Bend Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Small Smiles Dental Center of South Bend Hosts Open House

Elected officials and community leaders welcome kids' dental health provider to South Bend

South Bend, IN – Small Smiles today hosted an open house at a new facility on Miracle Lane that provides professional dental care in the South Bend area for thousands of children from low-income families.

“We are excited to open our doors to children, their parents, elected officials and community leaders,” said Dr. Bridgett Merritt-Brooks, Lead Dentist at the South Bend facility. “At Small Smiles, we believe that children from low-income families deserve the same quality of dental care as those in affluent communities. We are proud of our commitment to children’s dental health and we look forward to contributing to the life-long oral health of the area’s kids.”

As a partner with the state of Indiana, Small Smiles is one of only a few dental care providers who accept patients covered by Medicaid. It is estimated that nationwide fewer than one in four dentists receive Medicaid patients, exacerbating low-income communities’ challenges with poor dental health, which the U.S. Surgeon General has called a “silent epidemic.”

According to the Surgeon General, chronic tooth decay is the most prevalent childhood disease in America, affecting five times more children than asthma. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) statistics indicate that 68 percent of children have decay in their permanent teeth. According to the General Accountability Office (GAO), only 25 percent of low-income children nationwide receive adequate dental care. As a result, tooth decay is twice as prevalent in children from low-income families as it is in children from more affluent households.

“Oral health is about more than tooth decay,” said Merritt-Brooks. “Poor dental health in young children can lead to a variety of other health and developmental challenges including chronic pain, poor nutrition, distraction from learning and other activities, and self-confidence and self-esteem issues that arise from a having a less-than-perfect smile. Kids of all income levels deserve a great smile.”

Small Smiles Dental Center of South Bend is located at 2332 Miracle Lane in the Town & Country Shopping Plaza. Parents who are interested in scheduling an appointment for their child are encouraged to call (574) 259-5437.

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