

# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



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## **CHARLOTTE COMMUNITY INVITED TO DONATE TOOTHBRUSHES AND TOOTHPASTE AT "SMILE DRIVE THRU" EVENT ON FEBRUARY 1**

**(January 25, 2017, Charlotte, NC)**—On Wednesday, February 1, the Charlotte community is invited to participate in the nation's first-ever "Smile Drive Thru." The Smile Drive Thru is an initiative of America's ToothFairy: National Children's Oral Health Foundation and is part of Smile Drive Charlotte, a campaign to raise awareness of the importance of children's dental health and collect 50,000 toothbrushes for local youth in need.

On February 1, from 6-10am, in the parking lot of SouthPark Mall near Symphony Park, the community is invited to "drive thru" and drop off donated toothbrushes and toothpaste for underserved children. Participants will have the opportunity to interact with staff from America's ToothFairy and its partner organizations, enjoy free Starbucks coffee and receive a complimentary wristband for their donation. Wilson from WCCB-TV will broadcast live from the event.

More than 30,000 toothbrushes have already been contributed to the campaign thanks to event sponsors, SmileMakers and The Dale Jr. Foundation, as well as generous support from Charlotte area companies and individuals participating in #GivingTuesdayCLT in partnership with SHARE Charlotte. Beneficiaries of the donated oral care products include Title 1 Schools, non-profit organizations and agencies supporting children and families in need in Mecklenburg County.

Though largely preventable, tooth decay is one of the most prevalent chronic diseases among children in the U.S. Left untreated, tooth decay can lead to severe pain, malnutrition, life-threatening infections and even death.

"Many of the children we serve share toothbrushes with siblings, have been using the same toothbrush for years, or simply don't have one at all," said Jill Malmgren, Executive Director of America's ToothFairy. "Smile Drive Charlotte and specifically our Smile Drive Thru event is a great way for the Charlotte community to address this basic need and provide children the tools they need for a healthy smile."

Since its inception in 2006, America's ToothFairy has distributed more than \$17 million in donated dental products, educational materials and financial support to non-profit clinics and community partners delivering dental education, preventive services and treatment for underserved children.

### **About America's ToothFairy: National Children's Oral Health Foundation**

America's ToothFairy: National Children's Oral Health Foundation is dedicated to raising awareness of one of the most prevalent chronic childhood illnesses: pediatric dental disease, facilitating the delivery of comprehensive oral health services and improving quality of life for

underserved children. Through a national youth movement, collaborative partnerships with a diverse array of national service organizations, growing network of non-profit clinical partners, and a suite of high-impact community education and service programs, America's ToothFairy is building a powerful, united effort to eliminate tooth decay and protect the smiles of underserved children. For more information, visit [www.AmericasToothFairy.org](http://www.AmericasToothFairy.org).

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