

# Dental Doings



## Free Orthodontic Care For Kids In Need

(NAPSA)—Low-income children across the country may be able to qualify for pro bono orthodontic treatment.

“Every child should have the opportunity to have a healthy, beautiful smile that will have a positive impact throughout his or her life,” said Morris N. Poole, DDS, president of the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO). “Thanks to the generosity of AAO member orthodontists who donate their time and talents to the program, more young patients will have the opportunity to achieve a functional bite, an attractive smile and good oral health.”

The Donated Orthodontic Services (DOS) program is designed to provide orthodontic treatment to economically disadvantaged children who lack insurance coverage and don’t qualify for other dental health assistance.

DOS is administered by the Dental Lifeline Network (DLN), an organization that helps match patients who need care with doctors who can provide it. Applications are available at [www.mylifemysmile.org](http://www.mylifemysmile.org). Qualifying criteria include a low-income threshold and an examination by a general dentist to assess overall oral health. Applicants must be patients of a general or pediatric dentist or dental clinic. Dr. Poole noted that many accepted patients come into the program as a result of a referral from their family dentist.

“We are working hard to make the program as inclusive as possible,” said Dr. Poole. “A \$200 program administration fee is required at the time of application. While it’s a relatively low fee,



**Something to smile about: Economically disadvantaged children all over America may qualify for free orthodontic care.**

we appreciate that it may be a stretch for some families. To that end, provisions are in place to provide assistance, which is reviewed on a case-by-case basis.”

DOS typically advises that patients who have special needs seek orthodontic care through medical insurance or state-funded programs such as Medicaid.

Mindful of children who do not live near a volunteer orthodontist, the DLN will attempt to identify a nearby orthodontist who is willing to offer them pro bono treatment.

Dental industry partners supporting DOS include Dentsply GAC International and Align Technology.

Orthodontists are uniquely qualified specialists who diagnose, prevent and treat dental and facial irregularities to correctly align teeth and jaws. After graduating from dental school and then completing the required two to three years of specialized education in an accredited orthodontic residency program, orthodontists are eligible for membership in the AAO.

For more information or to find nearby AAO orthodontists, visit [mylifemysmile.org](http://mylifemysmile.org).