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**DentaQuest Foundation Supports
Pew's 50-State Report of Children's Oral Health
*Report Provides Roadmap for States to Improve Oral Health Policies***

Boston, Mass. (February 23, 2010)—A new 50-state report, *The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children*, issued by The Pew Center on the States with support from the DentaQuest Foundation and W.K. Kellogg Foundation illustrates how much work remains to be done to provide basic oral health services for children.

"As a country, we are still struggling to provide access to preventive oral health services," said Ralph Fuccillo, President of the DentaQuest Foundation. "Dental disease is nearly 100% preventable. This report establishes a national baseline and should be used to highlight opportunities within states to embrace proven and cost-effective policies that can improve children's oral health."

Pew researched the state of children's oral health in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The report discusses how well each state is employing eight proven policy solutions that ensure dental health and access to care for America's children. The policies include cost-effective ways to help prevent problems from occurring in the first place; Medicaid improvements that enable greater access to dental care for children; and data reporting systems that reflect progress on oral health status in each state.

"In his 2003 National Call to Improve Oral Health, the U. S. Surgeon General challenged America's health leaders to work to educate the general public and policy makers about the need for good oral health and to identify and replicate effective programs that will reduce disease and increase access to oral health care. This report highlights efforts that are working. We hope it serves as a national call to action for all 50 states to do more to improve children's oral health," said Fuccillo. "I believe over the next few years states will demonstrate great progress in responding to the oral health needs of our children."

Support for *The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children* furthers the mission of the DentaQuest Foundation to increase awareness of the importance of good oral health and to strengthen community initiatives and strategies that increase access to care for vulnerable children and their families.

A copy of the report can be found on the DentaQuest Foundation's website, dentaquestfoundation.org.

About the DentaQuest Foundation

The DentaQuest Foundation (dentaquestfoundation.org) is committed to optimal oral health for all Americans through its support of prevention and access to affordable oral health care, and through its partnerships with funders, policy makers and community leaders. For more information please visit dentaquestfoundation.org.