



## For Immediate Release

### **Code Red: The Oral Health Crisis In Your Classroom<sup>®</sup> Initiative Introduced Nationally**

*Educators support the invaluable inclusion of oral health education in school curriculums during the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) Conference.*

**New Orleans, LA** (November 18, 2011) - *Code Red: The Oral Health Crisis In Your Classroom<sup>®</sup> Empowering the Teacher to Teach Oral Health Education – A Curriculum Resource Reference* was introduced today at the National Alliance of Black School Educator's (NABSE) 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. The NABSE is devoted to furthering the academic success for the nation's children. As such those attending The Children's Oral Health Institute's Teachers Day Education Strand Workshop and Panel Discussion agreed with the need to incorporate oral health education into their lesson plans. Educators from around the country enthusiastically welcomed the recommendation to include one hour of oral health education into required curriculums for grades K through 12.

Teachers were most pleased to receive copies of the *Code Red* booklet at the workshop and national introduction of the publication. The resources compiled in the booklet, designed in the likeness of an apple, will make it easy to incorporate oral health lessons into their classroom activities and instruction. The audience of educators was happy to be provided toothbrushes, toothpaste and samples of the many available resources referenced in the booklet. Some of the other educational materials showcased to teach oral health included the Colgate's Oral Health Education Program for Kindergarten, Lessons In A Lunch Box and Project Clean Toothbrush from The Children's Oral Health Institute's to name a few.

Many appeared avid about the recommendations after learning more and seeing images, showing the correlation between untreated dental disease and the impact it has on classroom performance, social interactions, juvenile delinquency and more. Most substantiated the data linking dental pain to classroom performance and absenteeism outlined in the 2000 Surgeon General's Report. "Children with oral disease miss over 51 million hours of school each year. When these children are in pain from dentally related causes, this pain affects their ability to speak, eat, sleep or concentrate." The Children's Oral Health Institute's CEO & Director of Development, Dr. Winifred J. Booker said, "Teachers respect the need to incorporate oral health education into the curriculums because many of them live with the consequences of this neglect in their classrooms. *Code Red: The Oral Health Crisis In Your Classroom<sup>®</sup> Empowering the Teacher to Teach Oral Health Education* is a key pursuit in the collaborative efforts being launched in Maryland and around the country to help eliminate oral health neglect."

Teachers who learned for the first time about the 2008 deaths of two school-aged children from complications secondary to dental disease during the workshop were drawn to pause. In Maryland 12 year-old Deamonte Driver died after an infected tooth led to a brain abscess. In Mississippi, 6 year-old Alexander Callender collapsed on a school bus, in front of his classmates. The cause of death was ruled to be septic shock from untreated tooth decay. Knowledge of this preventable loss of two young lives further endured the commitment of the educators to make use of the resources offered in the *Code Red* booklet.

-more-

*Prevention that Empowers Globally!*



The National Dental Association (NDA), the Maryland State Dental Association (MSDA) and the Maryland Academy of General Dentistry (MAGD) continue to be instrumental leaders in helping to advance oral health education in the classroom for the nation. The Children's Oral Health Institute will continue to work with organized dentistry, state educators and local governments to encourage oral health education curriculum requirements for grades K through 12. One of the goals will be to distribute the *Curriculum Resource Reference*, to teachers and schools systems in every state.

Dr. Leslie E. Grant, past president of the NDA and Director of Advocacy and Outreach for the nonprofit stated the organization will provide faculty presentations, online workshops and share links to all of the compiled resources found in *Code Red*. For more information visit The Children's Oral Health Institute at [www.mycohi.org](http://www.mycohi.org) or call 1-866-508-7400.

###

*Prevention that Empowers Globally!*

---

P.O. Box 1901 Baltimore, MD 21203 • 866-508-7400