



APPLE TREE DENTAL

Access • Compassion • Excellence

Corporate Office

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www.appletreedental.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**APPLE TREE DENTAL AWARDED FOUR GRANTS
TO INCREASE PEDIATRIC SERVICES IN THE METRO**

(Mounds View, MN; October 20, 2022) – Apple Tree Dental is proud to announce that the organization has received four grants, which are bolstering its efforts to expand pediatric dental services for children and adolescents in the Twin Cities.

Generous grant funding from the Medica Foundation, Anoka County FY2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Minnesota Department of Health’s FY2022 Clinical Dental Education Innovations (CDEI) grant, and the Park Dental Foundation support this important work. Nearly one in five children under the age of 12 experiences tooth decay, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Lack of dental care causes many children to develop dental cavities, the most common disease in children. Untreated dental disease can cause problems with eating, speaking, playing, and cause children to miss school and other activities.



A pediatric patient at the Mounds View Center for Dental Health gets ready for a dental cleaning.
www.appletreedental.org/services/pediatrics

The lead grant funding is supporting the development of Apple Tree’s *Pediatric Center of Excellence*, under the direction of Nathaniel Cook, DDS, Director of Pediatrics. Through this support, Apple Tree is now expanding its specially trained pediatric dental staff, developing new pediatric dentistry training programs for general dentists and dental therapists, purchasing essential pediatric equipment and supplies, and expanding pediatric specialty clinic days for underserved kids throughout the region.

As one of Minnesota’s largest Critical Access Dental (CAD) providers, Apple Tree is expanding its pediatric dental care for Metro area children and their families through this new program, resulting in more children being treated and more trained pediatric dental workforce members available to provide care.

(more)

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Fairmont Center
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Fairmont, MN 56031
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Fergus Falls Center
327 Western Ave Suite A
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
218.998.2218

Hawley Center
520 Main Street
Hawley, MN 56549
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Little Falls Center
St. Gabriel’s Health Unity Family Center 3rd Floor
808 3rd Street SE Suite 330
Little Falls, MN 56345
320.631.5653

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Dr. Nathaniel Cook, Director of Pediatrics

Dr. Cook strongly advocates that all children deserve access to high quality, personalized, and compassionate dental care. "The link between oral health and overall health is well-established," he said. "While baby teeth may not be permanent, they provide an important foundation for a child's speech, confidence, and healthy adult teeth."

"Our Pediatric Dental Speciality Program is state-of-the-art, which is due in large part to our many wonderful partners and funders. We're grateful to the Medica Foundation, Anoka County, Minnesota Department of Health, and Park Dental Foundation along with our numerous other supporters, as their belief in our mission is allowing us to expand essential pediatric dental services," said Dr. Michael Helgeson, Apple Tree Dental CEO and Co-Founder.

Find more information about Apple Tree's new Pediatric Specialty Care at www.appletreedental.org/services/pediatrics.

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About Apple Tree Dental

Founded in 1985, Apple Tree Dental's mission is to overcome barriers to oral health. Apple Tree provides comprehensive preventive care and dental treatment services at eight Centers for Dental Health throughout Minnesota to individuals and families, and also operates on-site care programs at 150 community partner locations for vulnerable communities using the industry's latest technologies. With special expertise in pediatric, geriatric, and special needs populations, Apple Tree is nationally recognized for its pioneering approach to integrating dental care as part of overall health and wellbeing. For more information, visit [appletreedental.org](http://www.appletreedental.org).

About Anoka County

The mission of Anoka County, one of the fastest-growing counties in Minnesota, is to serve citizens in a respectful, innovative, and fiscally responsible manner. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is the federal government's primary program for promoting community revitalization. CDBG provides annual grants on a formula basis to Anoka County.

About Medica Foundation

Established in 1992, the Medica Foundation is a nonprofit, charitable grant-making foundation for community-based programs and services. We are the charitable giving arm of Medica, a Minnesota-based health plan. The Medica Foundation believes that everyone deserves a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Beginning with our 2021 grants, we're bringing more intention and focus to our advocacy and support for people of color, with the aim



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of eliminating disparities that result from institutionalized racism and discrimination. We are proud to share our new statements of mission, vision and values.

About Minnesota Department of Health

Minnesota's public health system is known as one of the best in the nation. It is built upon a strong partnership between the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), local public health agencies, tribal governments and a range of other organizations. The department's mission is to protect, maintain and improve the health of all Minnesotans. It has about 1,500 employees and an annual budget of approximately \$500 million in state, federal and fee-based funds. The Clinical Dental Education Innovations grant program supports innovative clinical training for dental professionals and programs that increase access to dental care for underserved populations in Minnesota.

About Park Dental Foundation

For over 45 years, Park Dental has been committed to providing communities with better and more accessible dental care. In 2015, the company extended this commitment by creating the Park Dental Foundation, a non-profit entity that supports education, research and dental care outreach. Park Dental has always believed in improving lives through the advancement of oral health, and the Park Dental Foundation allows the company to further build upon the many charitable activities that they have engaged in for decades. Since the formation of the Park Dental Foundation, it has distributed over \$150,000 in grants and scholarships, and has big plans to expand on these efforts in years to come.