

Third Annual 'Operation Troop Treats' Offers Kids Toys in Exchange for Halloween Candy, which will be Donated to Troops Serving Overseas

ATLANTA, GA, Oct. 29, 2014 – [Buena Vista Dental](#), a leading provider of quality family dental care, will be participating in ‘[Operation Troop Treats](#),’ a nationwide program – organized by dental provider, Kool Smiles – designed to promote dental hygiene during the Halloween season and give kids the opportunity to send overseas troops a sweet reminder of home. Operation Troop Treats encourages children to trade 25 pieces of their Halloween candy in exchange for a toy at Buena Vista Dental and Kool Smiles offices nationwide. The candy will then be sent in care packages to U.S. troops serving abroad via Operation Gratitude. In 2012 and 2013, Kool Smiles and Buena Vista Dental offices collected more than three tons of donated candy through Operation Troop Treats.

"Operation Troop Treats is a great way to raise awareness about the effects sugar-filled sweets on dental health, especially around Halloween," said Buena Vista Dentist Dr. Robert Naffah. "We're so happy to be working with Kool Smiles on this incredible program, and most importantly, to help support our troops abroad."

In addition to the exchange program, Kool Smiles, with the help of Buena Vista Dental, will be donating 100 dental care packages for troops to Operation Gratitude, as well as the funds to cover the assembly and shipment of 200 care packages. Operation Gratitude is a 501(c)(3), volunteer-based organization that annually produces over 100,000 care packages for U.S. Service Members deployed in harm's way, their children left behind, New Recruits, Wounded Warriors, Veterans and First Responders. For the past seven years, Operation Gratitude has encouraged dentists to collect Halloween candy from their patients for donation to the troops through their Halloween Candy Buy-Back initiative. Kool Smiles has organized the largest Candy Buy-Back effort ever by a dental organization participating on a national level.

"We are thrilled to have Kool Smiles participating in the program again this year. Their large scale support has made a huge impact on our success and, most importantly, made a real impact on the lives of members of our Armed Forces," said Operation Gratitude Founder Carolyn Blashek. "The kindness of small children donating their Halloween candy not only reminds servicemen and women of home, but also puts smiles on their faces and lifts their morale. Kool Smiles' impressive commitment to donate additional dental care kits and operational funds is deeply appreciated and helps us ensure we are sending valuable care packages to our troops."

Buena Vista Dental is participating in Operation Troop Treats during business hours from Wednesday, October 29 through Wednesday, November 5. The program is open to everyone, regardless of whether they are Buena Vista Dental patients. Every child that takes part will receive one toy for every 25 pieces of unopened candy in its original intended packaging. There is a limit of three toys per child and toys are distributed on a first come, first served basis.

Brushing twice daily and getting regular dental checkups is vital for people of all ages. However, Halloween is an especially important time for parents to pay close attention to their children's dental health. Good oral care can prevent complex and expensive procedures, as well as contribute to a child's overall health and wellbeing. Poor oral health, on the other hand, can contribute to significant health issues later in life such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

For more information on the program, please visit <http://www.mykoolsmiles.com/trooptreats>

About Buena Vista Dental

Buena Vista Dental is a multi-service dental office providing quality dental care for the whole family. Buena Vista Dental's mission is to build relationships with patients, working to ensure healthy teeth and happy smiles for all. Buena Vista Dental proudly accepts a number of payment options, including Medicaid. Please visit buenavistadentist.com for more information.

About Kool Smiles

Kool Smiles is dedicated to creating a world of happy, healthy smiles. As a leading dental health provider, Kool Smiles' mission is to improve lives by providing high quality dental care in a fun, compassionate environment. Kool Smiles dentists are proud to offer care to kids and adults with almost any insurance plan, including State Children's Health Insurance Programs (SCHIP), Medicaid and Tricare. Kool Smiles also provides oral health education programs through partnerships with community schools and organizations. For more information, please visit www.mykoolsmiles.com.

About Operation Gratitude

Operation Gratitude annually sends 100,000+ care packages filled with snacks, entertainment items and personal letters of appreciation addressed to individually named U.S. Service Members deployed in hostile regions, to their children left behind, and to [New Recruits](#), Veterans, Emergency First Responders and Wounded Warriors. Operation Gratitude's mission is to lift morale, bring a smile to a service member's face and express to our Armed Forces the appreciation and support of the American people. Since its inception in 2003, Operation Gratitude volunteers have shipped more than 1.1 Million packages to American Military members.

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