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BURLINGTON – Help Burlington Kids Preserve Their Smiles for a Lifetime

February is National Children’s Dental Health month and the Community Health Center of Burlington and Uncommon Grounds want to help Burlington’s kids preserve their smiles for a lifetime.

You can help by donating toothbrushes and travel size toothpastes at Uncommon Grounds, located at 42 Church Street, Friday, February 19 – Sunday, February 21. By making a donation you’ll not only warm-up from the cold with a free hot cup of Uncommon Grounds coffee, but warm your heart knowing that you’ve helped provide a simple tool that can make a significant change in the health of our community.

According to a report by the National Association of Community Health Centers, tooth decay remains the single most common disease among children in America. The report also notes that half of all children have untreated tooth decay by age 9 and 70% have at least one cavity by age 18. It’s also reported that 30% of all Americans over the age of 65 have no teeth.

The Community Health Center of Burlington provides preventive and restorative dental care to 6,000 community residents. As Chittenden County’s Federally Qualified Health Center, we offer access to dental care for all community members, including people experiencing homelessness and uninsured, low income residents. CHCB also operates our region’s only school based dental clinic located at the Integrated Arts Academy at HO Wheeler School. Started in 2004 in partnership with the Burlington School District, CHCB quickly learned that many kids right here in Burlington did not receive regular dental care or understand the importance of simple flossing and brushing. Now, five years later, CHCB will provide over 2500 preventive cleanings and give away thousands of toothbrushes and floss samples. We’ve become the dental home for over 500 kids every year who are either enrolled in Medicaid or are low income and uninsured. Working together with Burlington school nurses and the Vermont State Tooth Tutor program, we have made significant headway in improving the oral health of a new generation of Burlington kids. Healthy teeth help kids eat well, be pain-free, feel good and ready to learn. With the care that the school based dental clinic provides and ongoing, basic oral hygiene education, a whole new generation of Burlington kids will keep their health and smiles for a lifetime.

For 39 years, The **Community Health Center of Burlington** has increased access to high quality health care for Vermonters, regardless of their ability to pay. Our unique programs include: medical visits starting at \$6.00 for the uninsured or 13% of the total cost for dental visits; free and low cost prescription programs; social work support; and interpreter services for non-English speaking patients.

One of Burlington's largest family medical and dental practices and one of eight non-profit, federally qualified health centers in Vermont, the Health Center provides comprehensive health, dental, and human services to uninsured, underinsured, low income, and homeless people. CHCB is funded in part by a grant from the US Health Resources and Services Administration and generous community support.