Halloween is not usually associated with good oral health habits and healthy teeth. However, this year, dental professionals across the country will have the chance to educate their communities on the importance of oral health while raising money for children in desperate need of care.

The National Children’s Oral Health Foundation: America’s Toothfairy® (NCOHF) is launching the first ever Trick or Treat for America’s Toothfairy campaign to benefit underserved children nationwide. Dental professionals and caring individuals are invited to Trick or Treat for America’s Toothfairy this Halloween in support of life-changing NCOHF affiliate oral health programs.

Growing disparities in access to care coupled with a lack of overall oral health literacy has caused pediatric dental disease to reach epidemic proportions in our country. We cannot allow our children to suffer in silence from a disease that is not only treatable and curable, but also easily preventable by following basic steps for good oral health.

The NCOHF is the only independent non-profit national children’s health organization exclusively focused on supporting delivery of comprehensive oral health care to underserved children. The organization provides its growing national affiliate network of not-for-profit oral health programs with direct funding, donated dental products and technical support.

The NCOHF affiliate network has already provided comprehensive preventative, restorative and educational oral health services to more than 1 million children, but millions of children still suffer needlessly from our country’s No. 1 chronic childhood illness.

The NCOHF hopes the Trick or Treat for America’s Toothfairy campaign will help bring relief to these children in pain and move us closer to permanently eliminating pediatric dental disease in America.

Oral health messages are vitally important to share with the public, especially during the Halloween season when teeth come under attack from cavity-causing candy. Along with expanding affiliate services to reach the growing number of underserved children, the NCOHF hopes this program will encourage American families to look closely at and improve their own oral care routines.

Sponsored by the makers of LISTERINE® and REACH®, Johnson & Johnson Healthcare Products, Division of McNEIL-PPC, and Patterson Dental Supply, Trick or Treat for America’s Toothfairy allows dental professionals to raise money for a cause close to their hearts while educating their communities about the importance of good dental care.

Because corporate supporters underwrite all NCOHF program costs, 100 percent of donations from Trick or Treat for America’s Toothfairy will be directed to NCOHF affiliates and the children they serve.

The NCOHF unveiled Trick or Treat for America’s Toothfairy at the RDH Under One Roof Event in August. Since then, Patterson Dental has distributed thousands of Trick or Treat kits to dental offices across the country. Oral health professionals are encouraged to hand out kits to their patients, place collection boxes in their offices and hold fundraisers throughout September and October.

Dental professionals who want to take part in Trick or Treat for America’s Toothfairy can order their free supply of kits through their Patterson Dental representative or by visiting www.pattersondental.com. Trick or Treat kits and additional promotional materials just for dental offices are also available for download at www.americastoothfairy.org.