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DELTA DENTAL OF TENNESSEE AND GOVERNOR'S BOOKS FROM BIRTH PARTNER TO AWARD BIGGER SMILES GRANT TO HARDEMAN COUNTY'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – (Feb. 9, 2017) – [Delta Dental of Tennessee](#) has partnered once again with [Governor's Books from Birth Foundation](#) and Tennessee's [Imagination Library](#) to award 19 Bigger Smiles grants to Imagination Library programs in selected counties across the state, including **Hardeman County Imagination Library**.

Hardeman County Imagination Library, located in west Tennessee, provides one high-quality, age appropriate book to all enrolled children, birth to age five, each month, at no cost to families. Each month, the program mails more than 800 books to children, and since its inception in 2006, has mailed 80,576 books.

Tennessee's Imagination Library is made available to all Tennessee children, from birth to age five, through a unique, three-way partnership between Governor's Books from Birth Foundation (GBBF), Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, and a local affiliate program in each of Tennessee's 95 counties.

The Bigger Smiles grants will support and sustain Imagination Library programs that have shown exponential growth in the past year and whose volunteers have gone above and beyond in their enrollment efforts.

"We are extremely grateful to Delta Dental of Tennessee for their continued support and generosity in making this Bigger Smiles grant possible in Hardeman County," said Theresa Carl, president, Governor's Books from Birth Foundation. "Bigger Smiles grants allow us to enroll more children into Tennessee's Imagination Library, giving the gift of books to more children across the state — at no cost to families."

Research shows that reading to a child in an interactive style raises a child's IQ by six points. Imagination Library participation has consistently been shown to increase the amount of one-on-one reading time and nurturing between children and adults. In the Imagination Library model, parents are encouraged to read with the child, instead of to the child, so that parents are engaged in an interactive style.

"We believe in taking care of our children and are committed to the Governor's Books from Birth Foundation and Dolly Parton's Imagination Library," said Dr. Philip Wenk, president and CEO, Delta Dental of Tennessee.

Founded in 2004 to provide financial and administrative support for all 95 affiliate Imagination Library programs, GBBF builds a foundation for reading and learning through books for Tennessee's children. Through an annual state grant and private donations, GBBF funds half of the cost of books and mailing each month and supports affiliate programs with fundraising, volunteer training, and public relations.

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Delta Dental of Tennessee

Good oral health is essential to a healthy life and Delta Dental of Tennessee makes taking care of your smile easy with access to care, comprehensive benefits, exceptional service, and superior value. To best serve our mission and create more smiles, we created the Smile180 Foundation which supports Tennessee's dental colleges, children's hospitals, free and reduced cost community dental clinics, and other like-minded charities. Delta Dental is the largest independent dental benefits provider in the state with more than 2,000 employer groups representing more than 1.1 million Tennesseans. To unleash your smile power, choose Delta Dental. Visit www.DeltaDentalTN.com.

GBBF

The Imagination Library was established in 1996 by Dolly Parton as a gift to the children in her hometown of Sevierville, TN. The program mails one new, age-appropriate, high-quality book each month to registered children, from birth until age five. An annual gift of approximately \$25 provides 12 books for one child per year. With vital financial support from the Tennessee General Assembly, foundations, individuals, and private and corporate sponsors, the Governor's Books from Birth Foundation funds half the cost of books for the Imagination Library affiliates in each of Tennessee's 95 counties. For information on how to support your local Imagination Library program, or how to enroll a child, visit www.GovernorsFoundation.org or call toll-free, 1-877-99-BOOKS.

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