



THE ORIGINAL

Tooth Fairy Poll®



## NEWS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

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#### **Tooth Fairy Feeling Economic Crunch**

*Delta Dental survey shows the going rate for lost baby teeth dropped 42 cents in past year*

**DENVER (Feb. 23, 2012)** – The average gift from the Tooth Fairy dropped to \$2.10 last year, but she’s still visiting nearly 90 percent of homes, according to [The Original Tooth Fairy Poll®](#) sponsored by Delta Dental.<sup>1</sup> That average gift is down 42 cents from \$2.52 in 2010. The 17 percent drop in value is one of the larger declines since Delta Dental began conducting the Original Tooth Fairy Poll® in 1998.

“Like many people in Colorado and across the country, the Tooth Fairy needed to tighten her belt in 2011, but she’s hopeful for a recovery this year,” said Barbara Springer, vice president of administration for Delta Dental of Colorado. “More importantly, Delta Dental is encouraged that parents are still making visits to the dentist a priority for their children.” In fact, 90 percent of those surveyed say they take their children to the dentist every six months.

The Original Tooth Fairy Poll®, which surveyed 1,355 parents across the country, yielded these additional findings:

- The most common amount left under the pillow by the Tooth Fairy is \$1.
- Most children find more money under the pillow for their first lost baby tooth.
- Thirty-five percent of those surveyed allow their children 3-4 sugary drinks a day. Dentists say that’s too many.
- Seventy-one percent of those surveyed first take their child to the dentist between 2-3 years old. Dental professionals recommend that parents take their children to the dentist by age 1 or within six months after the first tooth erupts.

## **Tracking the DJIA**

The Original Tooth Fairy Poll<sup>®</sup> has generally been a good barometer of the economy's overall direction. In fact, the trend in average giving has tracked with movement of the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) in seven of the past 10 years.

“Like the Tooth Fairy, we at Delta Dental are hopeful for better economic news in 2012,” Springer said. “In the meantime, we will continue to support programs that provide access to dental care for those who would otherwise not have it.” The Delta Dental System annually donates more than \$45 million for community benefit activities.

## **Encouraging Healthy Habits**

The Original Tooth Fairy Poll<sup>®</sup> reflects a partnership between the Tooth Fairy and Delta Dental to promote good dental hygiene habits that encourage healthy mouths and healthy smiles across America. To help the Tooth Fairy and Delta Dental keep track of this longtime tradition, take the Original Tooth Fairy Poll<sup>®</sup> at [www.theoriginaltoothfairypoll.com](http://www.theoriginaltoothfairypoll.com). And, to get a sense of the taste and style choices of the Tooth Fairy, follow her at [www.pinterest.com/origtoothfairy](http://www.pinterest.com/origtoothfairy).

## ***About Delta Dental of Colorado***

*Delta Dental of Colorado is the largest and most experienced provider of dental benefits in the state. As a not-for-profit, Delta Dental of Colorado invests in oral health projects through the Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation that focus on access to care, prevention, education and research. The Colorado company is a member of the Delta Dental Plans Association, a national organization of not-for-profit Delta Dental plans. The national association is the largest dental benefits carrier in the nation providing coverage to more than 56 million people in nearly 95,700 employer groups.*

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<sup>1</sup> Delta Dental conducted the Original Tooth Fairy Poll<sup>®</sup> among customers across the United States. For results based on the total sample of 1,355, the margin of error is +/- 2.66 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level.