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Poor Dental Habits Begin in Childhood; Inspector Hector is on the Case

-- New, interactive brand makes brushing fun for kids

ST. LOUIS (January 03, 2008) – As Americans resolve to develop healthier habits in 2008, children’s oral hygiene may not be on the top of the list. But according to the Surgeon General, tooth decay and oral diseases are the biggest threat to childhood health. A recent Omnibus survey found 68 percent of parents believe that children would brush their teeth better if it were more fun. Today Vi-Jon Laboratories launched Inspector Hector, a new, fun, interactive brand that promotes oral hygiene habits in children by making brushing more fun.

Inspector Hector products are designed to engage kids in daily brushing. Inspector Hector Plaque Detector, a pre-brush rinse, turns teeth light blue and turns plaque a dark blue, showing children where to brush and making the process a little more fun. Inspector Hector Tooth Protector, a fluoride rinse, is used after brushing to protect teeth from cavities and stains. Both products are available in child friendly bubble gum flavor and Inspector Hector Plaque Detector is also available in mint.

“Inspector Hector is dedicated to making brushing fun for kids – and in turn, help parents win the daily tooth brushing battle,” said Kristin Ebert, Senior Director of Marketing at Vi-Jon. “When kids are engaged they’re more likely to make brushing a daily habit. Good oral hygiene habits, established early, provide a lifetime of health benefits.”

Inspector Hector targets children aged six to 12 because they are at an important stage of dental development. These children often have most of their primary teeth, and are getting their permanent molars and incisors. Developing proper dental habits in childhood is important for long-term health and is also a national priority. The Department of Health and Human Services’ Healthy People 2010 initiative aims to reduce the proportion of children with dental caries in their primary and permanent teeth by 2010.

“An estimated four million children have dental problems so severe they have trouble eating, sleeping and learning,” said Fern Ingber, President and CEO of National Children’s Oral Health Foundation. “American children miss more than 50 million hours of school each year due to dental-related illness.”

Teaching children good oral health practices is also an investment in their health. “Plaque is the clear, sticky film on teeth that if not removed regularly, can lead to dental cavities,” said Dr. Frank Simokaitis, St. Louis-area dentist. “The key to establishing good oral hygiene habits is to start early, make brushing fun, and stick to a routine.”

Inspector Hector is available in two flavors, Secret Blue Bubble Gum and Secret Blue Mint. Products are priced between \$2.99 and \$3.99 and are available in Wal-Mart stores nationwide.

About Vi-Jon

Vi-Jon, based in St. Louis, MO, is the nation’s oldest family owned private label health & beauty care company, serving retailers in all 50 states. Since 1912, Vi-Jon has operated nearly a million square feet of production and distribution centers, and specializes in research, branding, and manufacturing. For more information, please visit the company’s website at www.vijon.com

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