

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**For Immediate Use 2/13/07**

**Area Children to Receive “Toothprints” at QCC’s Dental Clinic**

WORCESTER – Quinsigamond Community College’s dental hygiene clinic is now providing important free “*Toothprints*” to area children and teens who are treated at the dental clinic.

*Toothprints* are made of a thermoplastic material that registers the bite imprint of a person. This imprint is much like a fingerprint, in that it is unique to every individual and can serve as a means of identification. Further, the *toothprint* harbors the patient’s saliva, which can provide DNA evidence of the person in cases where DNA identification is needed. The saliva in the *toothprint* also acts as a strong “scent tracer” for trained search dogs.

“Experts say that if *toothprints* were available, Elizabeth Smart could have been found much sooner,” stated Jane Gauthier, Coordinator of Dental Programs at QCC, referring to the missing child case of Elizabeth Smart in Colorado. “It is very inexpensive, fast, and easy.”

Children and teens mold their *toothprint* after their scheduled treatment and take it with them upon leaving. The process is simple and comfortable for the child. Quinsigamond is proud to be able to offer this important identification method to its young patients. On the morning of February 20, some children from the Worcester area will be among the first to receive *toothprints* from QCC’s dental clinic.

“I think is a great public service that we offer to our patients. We are hoping to be able to expand this service to the schools in Worcester County very soon,” added Gauthier.

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