



Happy Holidays to our Patients,

For the Labor Day holiday this year, I decided to go on a trip, however this trip was quite different from the normal three-day weekend get-away. About six months ago I was introduced to Dr. Charles Tozzer, who founded the charity, Dental Care for Children. He invited me to join him on one of his trips to Mexico and Haiti. So I decided to take him up on his offer, and went on a 5-day trip to Les Ceyes, Haiti .

In the United States, a toothache is the number one reason why a child misses a day of school. It is a very common illness that is often overlooked. Now, imagine the issues facing the children of Haiti. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere; the 3rd poorest country in the world and has only received aid recently due to the earthquake in Port-au-Prince . This country has no organized healthcare system and the average life expectancy is only 53.



The dental clinic was set up at the Pwoje Espwa orphanage (meaning Project Hope). The orphanage houses approximately 600 children and educates over 2500 students from the local areas. A group of 8 dentists and 1 hygienist took over the classrooms and transformed the rooms into 8 dental operatories. The dental equipment was stored in a shipping container at the orphanage and is set up each time the group comes down. It consisted of generators, compressors, sterilizers, and anything else a dentist would need.



Over the 3 days in which we provided dental work, the group saw over 250 patients and did approximately \$145,000 in dental services. The services included dental procedures like simple fillings, root canals, and even wisdom tooth extractions. The children were extremely well behaved and were so thankful for having the work done. The need was so great that when the children sat down in the chair each one asked for their teeth to be cleaned. It did not mean, "clean" in the way we mean in the United States. The children had such bad tooth decay that many of their teeth had turned black; the children wanted the "dirt" or decay cleaned from their teeth.



Though we accomplished a lot on this trip, there is always more work that needs to be done. I can't wait to get back down there and help out. If you would like to donate to either charity, you can visit their websites, www.DentalcareforChildren.org or www.FreetheKids.org and do so; or you can also make a donation at your next visit to our office.

The holiday season and the end of the year are fast approaching. This also means that your dental benefits will be expiring as well. So, if you have been postponing some dental work or just haven't been in, now is a great time to schedule an appointment before your dental benefits are lost for this calendar year.

As always, feel free to contact us with any questions that you may have. You can email us at info@forddentalgroup.com or call us at **714-842-7431**. You can also follow us on Twitter or Facebook; just follow the links from our webpage to get connected.

Sincerely,
Dr. Jonathan Ford