The Oregon Community Foundation

Ready to Smile

Created: January 2010
County agency partner: Coos County Public Health
Nongovernmental partners: Ford Family Foundation, Mudd Foundation, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Oregon and Southwest Washington, Coquille Tribal Community Foundation, Curry Health Foundation

Ready to Smile (RTS) is a formal partnership between the Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) and Coos County Public Health. It ensures students in grades 1, 2, 6, and 7 in Coos and Curry County public schools learn about oral hygiene, are screened for dental disease, receive sealants and fluoride varnish, and are referred to a dentist for urgent care when necessary.

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The partnership is the result of a year-long study that identified oral disease as the leading cause of school absenteeism among elementary students in Oregon and the foremost problem presented in emergency rooms. RTS partners with dental professionals in their clinics and through mobile dental vans to provide coordinated, cost-effective services to youth.

In its first year, RTS reached 744 students at 12 schools—almost 40 percent of all local schoolchildren. By the end of the current school year, student participation will be greater than 60 percent. The estimated value of all services to date is more than $330,000. OCF provided the initial $500,000 seed money. Other funding partners have collectively committed over $400,000.

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Volunteers are the finger on the pulse of Oregon helping this foundation to meet community needs and promote effective philanthropy.

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