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Reading For Smiles™

Vegas PBS is tackling a serious issue facing children in our community – dental health. While the American Dental Association recommends that infants pay their premiere visit to the dentist within six months of the eruption of the first tooth (and no later than the first birthday), large numbers of local children receive little or no dental health care during childhood, and this negligence may have serious long-term implications.



Since good physical health helps children arrive at school “Ready To Learn,” Vegas PBS staff work to provide dental health resources to families in need. This project, initiated in October 2001 and dubbed Reading For Smiles™ (RFS), consists of family workshops featuring video clips, songs and hands-on activities. Children who participate in these workshops take home resource bags stuffed with new toothbrushes, dental flossers, an age-appropriate dental health book, and a variety of resource materials for parents. A large number of participating families speak only Spanish, therefore, the RFS program makes every effort to have materials translated into their primary language.

In January 2007, RFS was presented the Outreach Community Impact Award by the National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA). RFS was praised for its innovation and creativity, especially in serving Latino families.

The Reading For Smiles™ program is made possible through support from local dentists, hygienists, and community health agencies, such as the **Community Coalition for Oral Health**, collaborating to provide dental health resources to families in need.

For more information regarding the Reading For Smiles™ project, contact Candace Thompson at (702) 799-1010 x.5420