

News Release
For Immediate Release
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**Free dental care now available to 129 low-income Twin Falls County children
because of Twin Falls Health Initiatives Trust grant to Regence**

TWIN FALLS – A \$45,000 grant from the Twin Falls Health Initiatives Trust will enable 129 low-income, uninsured Twin Falls county children to receive free oral health care through the Regence Caring Foundation for Children.

Children under the age of 17 who reside in Twin Falls county, who are uninsured and who do not qualify for governmental assistance such as Medicaid or SCHIP are eligible to apply, said Kathy Ellis, Idaho director of the Regence Caring Foundation for Children.

“We’re excited about the grant and pleased that we’ll be able to serve 129 kids in Twin Falls County,” Ellis said. “Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease. Studies indicate the oral health problem in Idaho and our nation overall is serious, sometimes causing overall long-term health issues. We’re trying to remedy this widespread problem with preventive procedures early in life. We want to help kids become healthy, strong members of our communities.”

Ellis said the Foundation partners with more numerous dentists in Twin Falls county who will provide the services.

“We’re very pleased to be able to partner with the Regence Caring Foundation for Children on this project,” said Rene LeBlanc, president of the board of directors of the Twin Falls Health Initiatives Trust. “The ability to provide oral health the children of Twin Falls County falls in line with our mission to improve the health and wellness of the citizens of our region.”

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, left untreated dental disease threatens to rob a child of much more than a smile, with far-reaching results such as:

- School absenteeism

- Weight loss
- Poor self-esteem
- Speech impediments
- Life-threatening infections
- Costly emergency room visits

“Because positive first impressions are often made with a smile, it is the Regence Caring Foundation for Children’s goal that every child has a healthy smile,” Ellis said. “Being able to reach and treat children who otherwise might go without dental care gives us something to smile about. Our ultimate goal is that those kids will be able to smile along with us.”

To apply for the free oral health care, those interested can call toll-free 1-866-938-0084 or visit www.caringfoundationforchildren.org.

About the Regence Caring Foundation for Children

The Regence Caring Foundation for Children, a 501(c)(3) organization, provides free dental care to eligible children in Idaho. It is sponsored and administered by Regence BlueShield of Idaho and has provided thousands of children with free dental care. Participating dentists provide dental services to eligible children at reduced rates. The Foundation is funded through tax-deductible contributions from individuals, corporations, civic groups, churches and other foundations. Contributions to help those children in need can be sent to Regence Caring Foundation for Children at P.O. Box 2560; Boise, ID 83701. For more information, visit our Web site at www.caringfoundationforchildren.org.

About the Twin Falls Health Initiatives Trust

The Twin Falls Health Initiatives Trust, Ltd was formed and organized to operate exclusively for charitable, scientific and educational purposes including, but not limited to identifying, selecting, and investing in, as appropriate, programs that will improve health and wellness of citizens of Twin Falls County, Idaho. It is also charged with identifying, selecting and providing grants to nonprofit charitable organizations that provide health and wellness related services in Twin Falls County, Idaho. The Twin Falls Health Initiatives Trust is committed to actively promoting and supporting educational programs that enable residents of Twin Falls County, Idaho to improve their health and wellness.

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