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## CHANGING A SMILE EVERY MILE: ARIZONA NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION PROVIDES DENTAL CARE 'ON-WHEELS' IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE VALLEY

*Community Dental Foundation Conducts Oral Health Treatment, Education With Fully-Equipped Mobile RV Unit for Arizona AHCCCS Patients, Families*

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**/24-7PressRelease/** - PHOENIX, AZ, September 19, 2008 - While the thought of the dentist can be closely related to emotions evoked in a horror movie, the standard 6 month visits are one of the most critical health care treatments to maintain, especially as a child. Nobody understands that better than Community Dental Foundation ([www.cdental.org](http://www.cdental.org)), an Arizona-based 501-(c)(3) organization dedicated to improving the oral health of children and individuals who face a lack of resources, education and dental insurance.

This not-for-profit foundation offers oral health opportunities that many of these families and children are not exposed to on a consistent basis, as they take their integrated mobile dental clinic, equipped with dental providers and high-tech equipment, to various residential communities, shelters and facilities across the Valley who are in desperate need for proper dental care.

"To know that these children aren't receiving adequate oral health treatments, cleanings and examinations due to circumstances beyond their control is heartbreaking," explains Gina Buben, Director of Development. "No matter how old you are, having any oral health issues greatly affects your well-being and overall confidence level. There is a misconception that baby teeth will fall out, so proper dental care isn't necessary—that couldn't be more wrong."

In addition to other emotional and psychological affects oral health can have on a child, the physical threats are even more serious. The research done behind these facts coupled with a sheer passion for bridging the gap between uninsured families and proper dental care and education cultivated Community Dental Foundation into existence.

In just one year, the organization has developed a widespread patient base and on any given weekend, the Community Dental Foundation Clinic can be seen in qualified areas around the Valley. Not only does Community Dental Foundation provide convenient weekend services, they won't leave until everyone has been seen—even if that means staying up until late night and seeing the first patient early the next morning.

"I am so grateful that they come out to our community; I have 5 children, and no car," explains Esmerelda Vargas, a resident at a City of Phoenix housing community. "To get a dentist appointment for all of them at one time is very difficult. Even when I get a taxi, which is covered under AHCCCS, they only allow me to take the child that has the dental appointment—I can't leave the others without supervision. Community Dental Foundation is a true blessing."

The alarming statistics behind poor oral care and the heavily underserved families in the Phoenix-metropolitan market is the driving force behind Community Dental Foundation's mission. "With over 5 million children experiencing tooth decay and other dental issues that will greatly impact their oral health and cosmetic appearance as they grow up—it makes you never take your smile for granted," says Buben.

For more information on Community Dental Foundation, log on to <http://www.cdental.org>. Pictures of various patients and on-site locations can be viewed at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/30581542@N07/>

Gina Buben and hi-resolution photos are available upon request.

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About Community Dental Foundation:

Community Dental Foundation is dedicated to improving the oral health of children and individuals with no dental insurance and low incomes by providing accessible treatment and education to their community. In November, 2006, the founders got involved with providing dental services in underserved areas for children. By dealing personally with the population in poverty, especially the children that needed dental work, the founders recognized there were still too many children that were not able to get urgent needed dental services. Community Dental Foundation decided to help children to be healthy and educate them about oral health to hopefully prepare and educate the next generation to break this cycle. Realizing the great need for dental services for the uninsured, the founders created Community Dental Foundation to assist in building a better future for the children.

## #



dental, flossing, health, mobile, oral, teeth

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