

Ronald McDonald House Charities®

THIRTY YEARS OF HELPING
KIDS TO SMILE AGAIN

Keeping Our Promise



The last days of summer are a busy time for most families with school-age kids. There are notebooks and new jeans to buy, backpacks to fill, and visits to pediatricians and dentists to pencil in before the new term begins.

For most of us, these back-to-school rituals are an accepted part of growing up. But there are millions of children in this country for whom a new fall wardrobe—or even a trip to the dentist—is an impossible luxury. Some kids have teeth that hurt so badly that they miss the first day of school—and many more days after that.

Giving Them Back Their Smiles

Fortunately, there is hope on wheels for children like these who live in Chattanooga, TN. Through a relationship with T.C. Thompson Children's Hospital, the city's new Ronald McDonald Care Mobile™ made its debut at Hardy Elementary School in March 2008.

This state-of-the-art dental and health program on wheels, fully equipped and professionally staffed, is one of more than 30 that Ronald McDonald House Charities® plans to begin in underserved communities around the world by 2008. But for students at Hardy Elementary and nine other Chattanooga schools, the shiny white vehicle is a singular wonder. Many kids, like second grader Emma Bentley, climb aboard for their first-ever dental checkup.

"There are children who never really smile because they have so many problems with their front teeth," explains Dr. Ruth Lima, who has worked on the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile for the past year. "We get them out of pain so they can eat, go back to school, and—best of all—smile again." Now finished with her treatment,

Emma still loves to peek in and say "hi" to Dr. Lima and her other new friends whenever they come to visit.

Staying Healthy Means Staying in School

Pediatric dental and medical care are two of the most important mandates of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chattanooga, says Executive Director Jane Kaylor. This means that the new Ronald McDonald Care Mobile must be a vigorous multi-tasker. In addition to providing cost-effective oral care, it is also the traveling headquarters for the "Brush Your Teeth at School" program, now heading toward its third anniversary. With the support of local McDonald's® Owner/Operators, every child in the 10 participating elementary schools is provided with their own toothbrush and toothpaste to use after breakfast and lunch.

The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile also visits area schools to help lead physical education classes in the Smartmoovz™ Fitness and Nutrition program. This low-impact workout, adaptable for all ages and abilities, is designed to combat the high rate of childhood obesity among Chattanooga's poorest kids. Approximately 4,000 children will be reached through the program within the coming school year, estimates Kaylor. "We are truly making a difference, one child at a time."



The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile program is just one part of our commitment to improving the health and well-being of children. For more information on RMHC® programs and how you can lend your support, visit www.rmhc.org.