

For Immediate Release
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Back to school time for more than 10,000 volunteer readers

SMART- Start Making A Reader Today volunteers begin reading with 12,000 children this week

Portland, OR- Throughout the state of Oregon this week, more than 10,000 volunteers will be reading with 12,000 kindergarten through third grade students as part of SMART – Start Making A Reader Today. SMART pairs children with volunteers for a one on one weekly reading time, and provides children participating in SMART with two free books per month to take home as their very own.

SMART reaches children at a crucial stage of development, and improves their chances for academic success by establishing reading skills and a love of reading by third grade. After third grade, children must be able to read to learn or they face a struggle to thrive academically.

“SMART is a research based approach, aimed at helping to instill reading skills in children at an early age. It’s also a method that provides many benefits, including giving a child one on one attention from a caring adult and opening a door to a love of reading,” said Lisa Wiebe, Chief Executive Officer of SMART.

Since 1992 SMART has served 100,000 children and given away 1.4 million books.

About SMART: SMART – Start Making A Reader Today is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to children’s literacy. SMART provides volunteers who read with one-on-one with K-3 children for a half hour each. Each child participating in SMART receives free books to keep and read with their families. It’s a simple approach that makes a difference. To learn more about SMART call 503-937-4800, or visit online at www.getsmartoregon.org

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Note for Editors/Reporters: SMART operates in 32 of 36 Oregon counties. If you would like to know more about how SMART impacts your community, contact Stacy Kean at 503-937-4817 or 503-314-5235 to reach local contacts and participants.