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12 Idaho Schools Received New Water Fountains/Bottle Filling Stations from Delta Dental of Idaho's "Rethink Your Drink" Grant Program

Delta Dental Funds Water Fountains for Healthier Smiles

BOISE, ID. — September 18, 2024 — Delta Dental of Idaho, the state's leading dental benefits provider, is proud to announce the installation of new Elkay® water fountains/bottle-filling stations at 12 schools across Idaho. This initiative is part of Delta Dental of Idaho's "Rethink Your Drink" grant program, encouraging children to choose water over sugar-sweetened beverages. The schools also received reusable water bottles and dental care kits for students and staff as part of the program.

The new bottle-filling stations provide free, cold, filtered water, making it easy for students and staff to stay hydrated throughout the day. These stations also display the number of plastic bottles saved by refilling. By offering a convenient and appealing alternative to sugary drinks such as soda, sports drinks, and juice, the stations help prevent oral health problems like tooth decay and cavities.

"Water is essential for staying alert and focused throughout the school day," said Heather Brown, Senior Director of Oral Health and Community Outreach for Delta Dental of Idaho. "Choosing water over sugary drinks like soda and juice is not only better for your teeth, but it also reduces the risk of health problems like heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Our goal is to make water more accessible to students so they can maintain both strong teeth and overall wellness."

Encouraging children to drink water instead of sugary drinks can help decrease the risk of obesity and improve their dental health by preventing the buildup of harmful bacteria that cause cavities. Clean water access also supports cognitive development, energy levels, and general well-being, which are crucial for a child's growth and learning.^{1,2} Moreover, public health initiatives that increase access to clean water in schools and communities reduce sugary drink consumption and improve children's overall health outcomes.²

2024 "Rethink Your Drink" recipients:

1. Aberdeen Middle School – Aberdeen, ID
2. AW Johnson Elementary – Firth School District, Firth, ID
3. Idaho Arts Charter Elementary – Nampa, ID
4. Kershaw Intermediate School – Sugar-Salem School District, Sugar City, ID
5. Kimberly High School – Kimberly, ID
6. Marsing High School – Marsing, ID
7. Middleton High School – Middleton, ID
8. Preston High School – Preston, ID
9. Rupert Elementary – Minidoka School District, Rupert, ID
10. Sage International School of Boise – Boise, ID
11. Sorensen Magnet School of the Arts and Humanities – Coeur d'Alene School District, Coeur d'Alene, ID
12. Sugar-Salem High School – Sugar City, ID

As a not-for-profit organization, Delta Dental of Idaho focuses on ensuring that children and adults in Idaho receive high-quality oral health education and dental care. The company's community outreach programs for children include the Grins on the Go school sealant program and the *GrinWell for Youth* program, which provides qualifying children with an opportunity to receive dental benefits at no cost. More than 162,000 Idaho students have received access to oral health care or education through Delta Dental of Idaho's community outreach programs.

To learn more about the "Rethink Your Drink" program, call 1-866-894-3563 or visit www.deltadentalid.com/grants#rethink.

About Delta Dental of Idaho

Delta Dental of Idaho is the leading dental benefits carrier in the state, providing quality, affordable dental plans for both companies and individuals. We are a not-for-profit organization seeking to improve the dental health of all Idahoans through our plan offerings and community outreach programs. Nationally, Delta Dental member companies provide coverage to more than 90 million Americans. For more information, visit deltadentalid.com.

1. The effects of sugary drinks on your child's health
<https://www.childrens.com/health-wellness/effects-of-sugary-drinks-on-your-childs-health-infographic>
2. Bleich, S.N., Vercammen, K.A. The negative impact of sugar-sweetened beverages on children's health: an update of the literature. *BMC Obes* 5, 6 (2018). <https://rdcu.be/dS0rD>

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