

In 2005, Goodwill Industries International provided job training and career development services for nearly 850,000 individuals, many of whom are parents. These parents often benefit from other local Goodwill programs aimed at stabilizing and strengthening families. "These local member agencies are expanding on our core mission of helping individuals overcome barriers to find and retain employment," says George W. Kessinger, Goodwill Industries International president and CEO. "We work to place parents in permanent employment, because we want to help them become more effective in meeting their families' needs. When you support a parent, you support the entire family and the community where they live."



SOUTHERN OREGON GOODWILL INDUSTRIES

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CHILDREN DO WELL WHEN THEIR FAMILIES
DO WELL, AND FAMILIES DO BETTER WHEN
THEY LIVE IN SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

2006 FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

MORE THAN JOB SKILLS

Across a seven-county region stretching into northern California, Southern Oregon Goodwill Industries helps low-income families develop their own potential—sometimes for the first time. For these families, this Goodwill agency makes a lasting difference by supporting parents not only in finding a job but also in working toward longer-term stability and success.

Betty Welden, vice president of workforce development, explains Goodwill's decision to expand its traditional employment services to make support available at home: "We realized how daunting it can be for parents to do well in the workplace if their families are in crisis. While one of our Job Coaches can prepare a parent for a job interview, family problems can completely undo a good outcome by interfering with job performance. We saw this happen so many times that we changed our approach."



NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN HELPING PARENTS FIND A PATHWAY TO INDEPENDENCE.

IT MEANS THE WORLD TO THEM TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR FAMILIES. AND IT MEANS A NEW WORLD, AND BETTER FUTURE, FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

—Gayle Byrne, President, Southern Oregon Goodwill Industries

STEPS TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY

With the board's endorsement, Southern Oregon Goodwill Industries staff—bolstered by new employees with expertise in family and children's issues—redesigned their scope of services to include a strong family-centered component. This approach is evident in programs like Steps to Success, which provides wrap-around services for families in which parents are making the transition from welfare into the workforce.

The road to family stability and self-sufficiency is a long one, and begins with a series of small steps. Families and program staff work closely together to create a set of family goals, identify the obstacles facing the family, and develop strategies the family can use to reach their goals. Southern Oregon Goodwill credits their use of a "Family Support Team," composed of up to three dozen community partner organizations, as being instrumental to the program's success. With this team in place, Goodwill uses a combination of intensive case management, onsite classes and referrals to services offered by community partners to help families meet the goals they helped establish.

To support family success over time, Goodwill staff work with them for up to three years. As these families become increasingly familiar with healthy routines and positive outcomes, more ambitious goals—such as self-employment or home ownership—may become feasible. "By giving parents these skills," says Welden, "we also empower them to show their children that there is a better way."

FAMILIES COUNT FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

Through a joint venture of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Goodwill Industries International, the FAMILIES COUNT Family Strengthening Awards recognize Goodwill member agencies with outstanding programs that work to give children what they need most—strong, capable and economically successful families. Responding to the varied needs of the families they serve, these organizations improve the economic prospects of working men and women and create the services and networks of support that all families need to realize their aspirations for themselves and their children.