



EXPLORING HEARTHS & HEALTH

Research conducted by Operation Smile and its partners has found a potential relationship between maternal smoke inhalation from cooking over an open flame and an increased risk of having a child with a cleft condition.

This is a call to action: In many developing countries where Operation Smile provides surgical care, many families cook over open stoves inside the home.

In an effort to boost the overall health of these families, Operation Smile will send a team of undergraduate volunteers to Chiapas, Mexico, where they'll spend a week replacing open-flame stoves.

Operation Smile has teamed up with InfraRural, a Mexico City-based organization that builds and installs wood-burning cook stoves. The student team will work with InfraRural representatives to install the stoves, which are locally sourced, as well as teach families how to use them. They will also share lessons on nutrition and fire safety.

DETAILS:

WHERE: Chiapas, Mexico

WHEN: May 23-31, 2020

GOAL: Install 15 stoves

COST: A stove costs \$240, according to InfraRural. The students are fundraising to cover the cost of the stoves. Each student will pay \$1,500 for this trip.

SUPPORT: Please consider making a donation online at www.operationsmile.org/cookstoveproject



OUR 'WHY': MEET LITTLE ALEXANDER

Alexander was all smiles as his mother welcomed Operation Smile volunteers into their Chiapas home.

It wasn't long before he had everyone smiling, too – after all, they knew the story behind his smile. Born with a cleft lip, the baby received surgical care from Operation Smile during a recent medical mission, not far from home.

And now, just months after his surgery, Operation Smile student volunteer Holly Zoeller found herself working with this family to help even more people across Chiapas – by replacing open-flame stoves.

Alexander's mother was “so dedicated to helping her son thrive,” said Holly, who's studying at the University of Louisville in Kentucky, U.S. “It reminded me why we were there: to try to create an intervention.”

Read more at [student programs.operationsmile.org](http://studentprograms.operationsmile.org)

ONCE THE STOVE IS INSTALLED ...

The team will invite family members 18 years and older to take part in a voluntary survey. Questions will cover health and cooking habits. We will do this to measure impact.

Our aim is for this program to be sustainable; we intend to send more student teams to Chiapas to follow up with families who received stoves and install more for others.

SHIRTS FOR STOVES:

Purchase this special-edition shirt and proceeds will go toward purchasing stoves: bonfire.com/cookstove

