

Girl Banned From Selling Mistletoe, Told to Beg

An Oregon girl has been banned from selling mistletoe in a city park. The 11-year-old is raising money to help pay for braces.

However, a security guard told her even though she cannot sell mistletoe in the park, she is allowed to beg.

Madison Root wants to improve her smile. So she went to her uncle's farm to cut and chop a hundred bags of mistletoe this Christmas season, hoping to sell them to help her dad pay for her braces.

Her target consumers? Shoppers at an outdoor market in Portland, Ore.

"I wouldn't think that I'd have any problems because people are asking for money, people are selling stuff, this is a public place," Root explained.

A security guard told Root she can beg for donations, but she cannot sell anything without a license because of Portland city code.

"There were people just next to me that have big signs that say 'Got Pot,'" Root said. "They're raising money for pot. I don't want to beg! It's just I would rather work for something than beg."

Portland Parks Bureau spokesman Mark Ross said begging is a form of free speech, protected under the First Amendment.

Fortunately, the story has a happy ending. Television viewers are stepping up to the plate, ordering hundreds of bags of mistletoe.

Also, the owner of a huge Christmas tree farm, Mckenzie Cook, gave Root \$1,000 in seed money.

"I saw in Madison what I saw in myself at a very early age," Cook said.

And so Madison Root finds herself in the orthodontist chair, and the braces are going on.

"There's always exceptions being made in our Portland laws, so why can't there be an exception made with a little girl selling mistletoe for her braces?" Root asked.