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Local Kids Brush Up On Hygiene

BIG SPRING – Dental hygiene can be fun.

That was the message area children learned during Saturday's Dental Health Fair, held at Howard College.

The event, hosted by the college's dental hygiene department, aimed to teach youngsters that keeping their teeth healthy doesn't have to be all work and worry.

Balloons, puppets and tattoos were just some of the props students and teachers used to get their message across.

“Many of these children have either never been to a dentist or know about dental hygiene, so this helps get the word out. Also, it makes it a little bit more fun for them,”

said Mary Wallace, an instructor at the college. “Also, it's good for our students. It gives them a chance to interact with the children.”

The dental fair, which has been an annual attraction for more than 25 years, is held in conjunction with Children's Dental Health Month. Attractions included a puppet show highlighting the benefits of fluoride and a slew of interactive exhibits that taught children various aspects of dental health. Also, children were able to trade in their old toothbrushes for new ones, Wallace said.

Wallace said the event is just as much fun for the students as it is for the children.

“This is my fourth fair ... and I just love watching the students interact with the children and make them smile,” she said.

Up to 100 children were expected to visit the fair Saturday and Wallace hopes to attract even more in the future. “We'd like to have between 100 and 150 kids come in,” she said.

Wallace said the fair is not the only service the department provides to the community.



Howard College Dental Hygiene student Brianna Thurman applies a tattoo to the cheek of young Axton Fish during the department's annual Dental Health Fair, held on the Howard College campus Saturday morning. (Herald photo/Steve Reagan)

“Even after all these years, a lot of people in the community don't really know there's a hygiene class here at the college,” she said. “Our main priority is to serve the community, not just teach our students.”

Teeth cleaning and dental X-ray services are provided at reduced cost by the department. for more information, call 264-5075.

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