

Owens Dental Hygiene Program Brightens Smiles During Nationwide Give Kids A Smile Day



Five-year-old Dylan Plummer of Walbridge opens wide during Give Kids A Smile Day at Owens.

PERRYSBURG TOWNSHIP, OH - Oral hygiene, pearly white teeth and smiling faces were abundant at Owens Community College as more than 100 area children received free dental service courtesy of the Dental Hygiene program as part of the nationwide Give Kids A Smile Day.

Owens' Dental Hygiene program, in collaboration with the Toledo Dental Society, was among thousands of organizations that provided free dental services and educational outreach for "at-risk" children across the country.



Owens Dental Hygiene student Ruth Goeder of Toledo provides free dental service to six-year-old Hailey Perez of Bowling Green.

For six-year-old Hailey Perez of Bowling Green, the experience of having her teeth cleaned was "pretty neat". Showing off her shiny white teeth to her mother, Sandy Perez of Bowling Green, and Owens Dental Hygiene second-year student Ruth Goeder of Toledo, Hailey was overjoyed when she received take-home gifts that included a Superman toothbrush and toothpaste.

"I like my new toothbrush," said a smiling Hailey while holding up her gift. "I really liked getting my teeth cleaned."

Give Kids A Smile Day is a national initiative by the American Dental Association, which is dedicated to focusing attention on the epidemic of untreated oral

disease among disadvantaged children. Held each February in conjunction with National Children's Dental Health Month, Give Kids A Smile Day provides free oral health education, screening and treatment services to children from low-income families across the country. In 2007, events were held at approximately 2,250 locations across the nation, with over 39,000 dental team volunteers and 14,400 dentists providing treatment to over 758,000 children.



Eight-year-old Taylor Smith of Millbury shows her appreciation to Owens' Dental Hygiene program following her free teeth cleaning.

"Give Kids A Smile Day is an outstanding program offered by Owens Community College," said Hailey's mother Sandy. "Our family understands the importance of keeping teeth cleaned and appreciates the quality dental care. It really means a lot and I am extremely thankful."

According to Beth Tronolone, Owens Chair of Dental Hygiene, Give Kids A Smile Day is also a wonderful opportunity to raise the importance and awareness of preventive dental care such as flossing, brushing and regular dental visits.

"If untreated, tooth decay just continues to get worse and affects children's overall health," Tronolone stated. "Owens Community College's Dental Hygiene program is proud to once again participate in such a worthwhile endeavor and provide dental services to individuals in need. Our goal during Give Kids A Smile Day is to provide each attendee with a positive dental experience and help them feel comfortable smiling again."

Tronolone added, "Owens' Dental Hygiene program is extremely appreciative to all our friends and partners for volunteering their time and helping local children in need of proper dental care. The day was once again a huge success because of their efforts."

Dental services available for free throughout the day included dental education and screening, X-rays, oral prophylaxis (cleanings), limited restorations and dental sealants. In addition, first-year students from the health program provided educational presentations for parents and children.

Local communities benefitting from the free dental services included Millbury, Walbridge, Bowling Green, Swanton, Perrysburg, Toledo, Oak Harbor, Rossford, Northwood, Holland and Pemberville, among others.



Three-year-old Anna Smith of Millbury is all smiles after her visit to Owens' Dental Hygiene Clinic.

The College's Dental Hygiene program provides more than 40 students with a fully accredited, scientifically current and competency-based curriculum annually. Students receive classroom instruction as well as hands-on experience in the Dental Hygiene Clinic, while preparing to sit for the national, state or regional exam in dental hygiene. Owens' program also offers dental services to area residents through its Dental Hygiene Clinic. The 20-chair clinic is staffed by dental hygiene students and supervised by licensed dental professionals at Owens, and appointments are available during the Fall and Spring semesters for a \$25 fee.

Owens Community College is one of the fastest-growing higher educational institutions in Ohio. On the Toledo-area and Findlay-area campuses, Owens serves more than 45,000 credit and non-credit students. Owens is committed to providing small classes, personal attention and unmatched affordability. Owens Community College offers associate degrees that transfer to baccalaureate degrees in the Arts and Sciences and over 130 technical program areas in Agriculture, Business, Health Sciences, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Skilled Trades, and Engineering and Transportation Technologies. Owens students also can earn the first two years of a bachelor's degree with a smooth transfer to any area four-year college or university. For more information, visit www.owens.edu.