

Miles of smiles at Community Health Center event

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NORWALK -- More than 50 uninsured children and teenagers had something to smile about Saturday, as they were given free dental care at the Community Health Center.

Two dentists and three dental hygienists donated their time to give uninsured children and teenagers proper dental care at the Community Health Center's annual "Give Kids a Smile Day."

Uninsured children age 1 to 18 from low income families received dental care at "Give Kids a Smile Day." Dentists provided teeth cleaning as well as restorative work, according to Enid Guzman, dental care coordinator for the Community Health Center. Walk-in patients were accepted, and children received a goody bag on the way after their appointments.

The event was part of an annual cross-country initiative sponsored by the American Dental Association to promote dental care for needy children. A similar program will be held Feb. 18 in Stamford.

Aside from giving children dental work, the event also gets children used to the experience of going to a dentist.

"It's an opportunity to also reinforce them coming back if they need more work to be done," said Dr. Marla Daniels, one of the dentists at the Community Health Center who participated in the event. "It's a very laid-back day. You can bring the whole family."

Daniels' 13-year-old daughter Hannah helped out by handing out goody bags to the patients.

Speaking through a translator, Jamie Cardenas, who took his three children to the event, said dental care is "very important," and the health center provided a very important service.