

Student Club Hosts Health Fair

Local elementary school enjoys wellness-focused event

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An Andrews University student volunteer teaches a student at Mars Elementary healthy hand-washing technique during last week's Health Fair.

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As a result of the health movement taking Andrews University and the country by storm, the Andrews University chapter of Enactus partnered with Florida Hospital for a four-week Creation health curriculum to help spread awareness to people about health and wellbeing. This also ties in well with the Advent message for health and health-related habits.

One of the events involved in this curriculum was the Enactus Health Fair held in the gymnasium at Mars Elementary School in Berrien Springs on Sunday, November 8. The fair had a variety of activities geared toward children to help them understand from an early age the importance of good health.

“It was a great event for children to think about health and wellness and for adults to make needed changes,” says Dominique Wakefield, director of University Health & Wellness for Andrews University.

People from all walks of life attended the fair, and many Andrews students volunteered their services at the various booths and stations.

Upon walking into the school, people were met with balloons and a photo booth to take pictures.

“The fair was set up in booths,” explains junior Spanish for translation major Angela Rubin de Celis. “These weren’t regular talking-to-people booths, though, they were activity booths where the children could do different activities and games. Enactus staff and volunteers interacted and basically played with the children as they obtained a hands-on experience.”

Booth activities included a recycling game, a hand washing tutorial, physical games, a food naming test and more. There were also costumes for children to wear, such as a fireman, doctor, nurse or policeman.

Those who registered at the entrance received additional health and wellness information following the event.

Senior exercise science major Hannah Alconcel said, “In our booth, we highlighted fitness testing through performing various tests of strength and flexibility. Throughout the fair, children and parents participated in push up tests, curl up tests, and shoulder flexibility tests, where most of the participants scored a good to excellent rating from their performance.”

Another booth hosted a full body scan which determined participants’ “real age,” meaning the age that their body reflects rather than their actual age, utilizing blood pressure and vital statistics. There was also a fitness-testing booth, which determined how fit someone was based on how many pushups and crunches they could do, and also tested a person’s flexibility.

“I was truly delighted to see parents physically fit to lead their children into a healthful lifestyle, and enjoyed seeing those who were not as fit still try to show their children the importance of fitness,” Alconcel said. “The children were eager to participate and were surprisingly quite strong as many of them performed 20+ pushups in a row! I also loved seeing the fearless attitude that children had towards fitness, especially because many people have fears and barriers about beginning a fitness regimen.”

Another fun booth was the rest stop booth, which emphasized the need for rest to maintain a healthy body. A recycling station showed how important it is to recycle in order to keep the earth healthy, and a dental station checked the health of kids’ teeth and even gave every visitor a goody bag with a toothbrush, toothpaste and floss. One of the more interesting booths was the “Visit the Animals” station where there was a cat, turtle, hedgehog and hamster. Another booth emphasized the importance of teamwork and helped put the wellness movement in a bigger picture to show that the more people that are involved, the more people will continue.

“The kids seemed happy to participate and accomplished after performing the exercises, making my team feel accomplished that we imparted the idea that fitness can be rewarding and fun,” Alconcel said,

The fair had about 50 children in attendance, with parents and some teachers assisting as well. The children received a certificate of completion for participating in the Creation Team classes, and a healthy snack. Andrews University sent volunteers from University Health & Wellness, the Department of Nursing, a dentist and assistant from University Medical Specialties on the University campus, students from the Department of Public Health, Nutrition & Wellness, and one student even brought her pets for display.

For more information about the health and wellness program at Andrews University, visit andrews.edu/wellness.

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