

MEDIA RELEASE

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QCC Provides Free Dental Assistance for Area Children

WORCESTER, Mass. – The Quinsigamond Community College Dental Hygiene program will again conduct its *Kidseal Project*, benefiting Worcester Public School children, beginning in May.

Kidseal provides needed free dental care to area children in Worcester. Dental hygiene students at QCC, along with volunteer dentists and hygienists from the community, participate in the project. QCC students visit eight Worcester public schools in the spring semester and provide sealants and a fluoride varnish to children. In total, close to 1,500 students are serviced with fluoride and 300 children are provided sealants, with both procedures helping to clean teeth and prevent future dental issues.

“There is no need for our children to suffer with dental infections that can cause pain, discomfort, or loss of teeth,” stated Joyce Cooney, QCC Professor of Dental Hygiene and the *Kidseal* coordinator. “I know that our program won’t solve the problem, but we feel it helps a great deal.”

Cooney believes that the difficulty in accessing dental care for children of low income families, as well as poor dental health education and a lack of fluoridated community water, all contribute to the dental problems they see through *Kidseal*.

Kidseal is part of the unique service-learning, community service component of the QCC curriculum. In total, the College provides well over \$10,000 of in-kind free services to area children. The *Kidseal Project* is also the first of its kind in Massachusetts.

“I am proud that our *Kidseal* initiative was the first in the Commonwealth, as now many colleges and facilities have modeled our program,” added Cooney.

Among the schools benefiting from the *Kidseal Project* are Grafton Street School, Union Hill, Burncoat Street School, Lake View School, Chandler Magnet, Vernon Hill, Lincoln, and McGrath schools.

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