NOVA Students Conduct Teddy Bear Clinic



A young "doctor" dilates Curious George's eyes with the help of his mother and second-year NOVA optometry student Danny Hamilton.

Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry (NOVA) students taught kids about eye examinations — in a different and fun way — during a "teddy bear clinic" at the university's 10th annual Day for Children. The clinic was arranged by Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital for the event, where 5,000 children and their families learned about health and healthcare services, underwent screenings and accessed community agencies. Children who participated in the clinic received their own brand-new teddy bear, donned a mask and gown and took their bears through a series of stations for health checks. This year was the first in which the clinic included an eyecare station.

According to Dr. Janet Leasher, Director of Community Outreach at NOVA, the event was a win-win for all. "The optometry students learned how to interact with kids and their parents in an interdisciplinary, fun community setting," she said. "The children learned what an eye exam is all about, and hopefully won't be afraid of dilation, and parents learned the importance of comprehensive eye examinations from optometrists."