

Capital Area Healthcare & Employment Council

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(Photo by Robert Killips/ Lansing State Journal)
Davina Kent, 5, from Lansing, is dressed up in surgical garb and handles the instruments while her cousin Tayja Shackelford, 4, from Flint waits for her turn at the health career focused, Super Saturday event at Impression 5 Science Center.

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Hands-on fun gives youngsters first-hand look at health care jobs

Derek Wallbank
Lansing State Journal

Twelve-year-old Jeremy Phillips picked up a grabbing tool, reached for the piece of candy on the table in front of him and learned something.

He hadn't gone to the Impression 5 museum Saturday morning to learn anything, just to have fun, he said.

But after thinking about his experience, he finally accepted that as fun as he thought playing with the grabber was, "It would be hard to live without a hand."

It was part of the Health Works! Super Saturday at the children's museum, sponsored by the Capital Healthcare and Employment Council.

Executive Director Cindy Whittum said the goal of the annual event, now in its second year, was to open young minds like Jeremy's to the possibility of a career in health care.

"We need to plant that seed early," Whittum said. "You don't have to just be a doctor or a nurse to be involved in health care. There are a lot of options out there."

Whittum said the Lansing area will have a shortage of health care workers in the next few years, fueled by industry growth and the retirement of baby boomers already in the field.

"That's why we really need to be working hard right now," she said.

Angela Mitosinka of St. Johns brought her kids to the museum so they'd learn about their health. She took them by the display that showed how much fat was in a hamburger, then through a walk-through heart.

"It's important for them to see that stuff," Mitosinka said. "I thought that was very good for the kids."

It wasn't a kid-only day, however.

A masseuse from Sparrow Hospital solicited volunteers for a two-minute demonstration, and Mitosinka - who had spent much of her day to that point holding her children's bags and coats - gladly accepted the offer.

"That was worth the drive," Mitosinka said with a laugh.

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