

HILLSDALE
**DAILY
NEWS**

VALUABLE LESSONS

Students get ‘Head Start’ on fire safety

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By Nicole Dominique

HILLSDALE — A group of excited preschoolers learned more about fire safety and equipment Friday when a special guest paid them a visit. Hillsdale City Firefighter Mark Hawkins brought a fire engine and fire equipment to Anita Young’s Head Start class at the Community Action Agency, and was pleased to learn that the children had already been learning about safety.

“We went through a whole month of fire safety,” Young said. “We’ll revisit through the year, on matches, lighters, planning routes, alarms and stop, drop and roll.” The children asked about suits and “fire dogs” as Hawkins showed them his gear, explaining what each part of the clothing was for. Students also got to try on his helmet, coat and mask.

“It looks scary,” Hawkins said when he put on his mask, “But it’s still just me.” Young said getting the children to understand what firefighters will look like in an emergency is one of the most important things they can learn during fire safety month.

Most youngsters can be scared of a fully-suited firefighter, especially the distorted voice, if the outfit isn’t explained properly.

Hawkins covered exiting a burning building, leaving toys and pets behind, and where to reunite with family members before letting the children peek into, and even sit in, his truck.



Hawkins shows the children the truck’s different nozzles. NICOLE DOMINIQUE PHOTO



Ethan tries on a firefighter’s mask. NICOLE DOMINIQUE PHOTO