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Brace yourself: Metro kids sport Tiger smiles

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Forget pearly whites—Metro Detroit kids want Tiger Teeth.

No, not carnivorous fangs.

School-age Tiger boosters across Metro Detroit are clamoring for orthodontists to outfit their braces with orange and blue elastic ties instead of boring beige rubber bands. Flashing “Tiger Teeth” has become a way for kids to show their love for Detroit’s powerhouse baseball team.

“I got the blue and orange to show my Tiger spirit,” said Bryant Charters, 14, an eighth-grade student at East Hills Middle School in Bloomfield Hills who got his colorful additions Tuesday at the Birmingham office of Tyler, Dumas, Reyes.

“I’ve been a fan my whole life. We always get tickets to go to the games, and since they’ve been the best team in the league, I’ve started watching every single game. It’s just amazing,” said Charters, who plans to attend Game One of the World Series at Comerica Park on Saturday with his father and two brothers.

At Tyler, Dumas, Reyes, which also has offices in

*“It’s your
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—Dr. Scott Tyler
Tyler Dumas Reyes Orthodontics

Rochester, at least 200 Metro Detroit kids have asked for orange and blue elastics for their mouth gear in the last few weeks, said orthodontist Scott Tyler.

Demand for the colorful elastics, which connect a metal wire to brackets glued onto teeth, exploded this week after the Tigers clinched the American League championship and won a spot at the World Series, he said. The bands are easily changed, especially when the braces are adjusted.

“It’s your statement, your bling,” Tyler said.

“It allows you to really indi-



Dr. Scott Tyler puts orange and blue elastic ties on the braces of 14-year-old Dan Kline so the youngster can show his love for the Detroit Tigers. At least 200 Metro Detroit kids have asked for the colorful elastics for their mouth gear in the last few weeks, says Tyler, at his office in Birmingham.

vidualize your look.”

Kids often request school colors, or colors that represent the seasons or holidays, to keep their teeth looking funky, even if they have a mouth full of metal to help correct problems, said Courtney Teno, an orthodontic technician at Spillane & Reynolds in Novi.

Indeed, Samantha Ansara, 12, intended to decorate her teeth in black and orange elastic ties for Halloween, but she changed her mind Tuesday and had Teno put on orange and blue ones instead.

“I reminded myself about the Tigers, and I thought it’d be

really cool to have these for Spirit Day for the Tigers,” said Ansara, a seventh-grader at Novi Middle School.

For Dan Kline, the question of what colors of elastic to display in his mouth usually comes down to a simple question: What will annoy his mother?

“She doesn’t like orange, so I thought this would be a good idea,” said Kline, 14, an eighth-grader at Adams Middle School in Royal Oak.

“I really like the Tigers, and I want to support them. I’m so happy they’re winning.”

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