



# School Oral Health Program

## Maine CDC/DHHS

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Oral Health Program  
Nicole M. Breton RDH, BS



*John E. Baldacci, Governor*

*Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner*



# School Oral Health Program

## A Healthy Smile For ME





# School Oral Health Program

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- Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease.
- 5 times more common than asthma.
- 7 times more common than hayfever.
- 52 million school hours missed annually because of oral problems



# Surgeon General's Report 2000

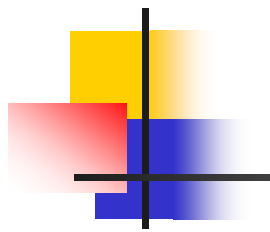
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- 50% of decay in low income children goes untreated.





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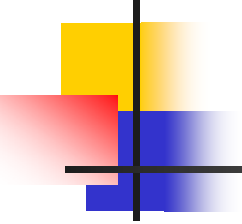
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*"What amounts to a silent epidemic of dental and oral diseases is affecting some population groups. This burden of disease restricts activities in schools, work and home and often significantly diminishes the quality of life."*

*Surgeon General David Satcher, PH.D,  
M.D*



# School Oral Health Program

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- Poor oral health and untreated infections can have a significant impact on school aged children.
  - Children have trouble eating and sleeping, and can experience speech impairments, trouble focusing and low self esteem
  - Dental disease can greatly reduce a child's capacity to succeed in the educational environment.



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## Prevention and Education

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- Children are often unable to verbalize their dental pain
- Teachers may notice a child who is having difficulty attending to tasks or who is demonstrating the effects of pain (anxiety, fatigue, irritability, depression and withdrawal from normal activities)



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- School nurses report a range of oral health problems such as dental caries, gingival disease, malocclusion (poor bite), loose teeth and oral trauma







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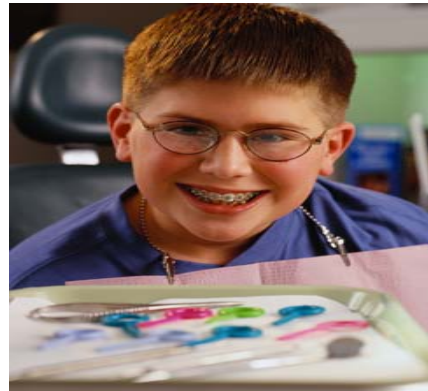
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- Children who are missing teeth have to limit their food choices because of chewing problems, which may result in nutritionally inadequate diets
- Inadequate nutrition during childhood can have a detrimental effect on children's cognitive development and productivity in adulthood



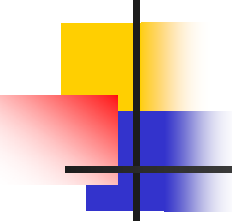
# School Oral Health Program

- The Maine Oral Health Program supports oral health promotion and dental disease prevention in school-based programs for students in kindergarten through sixth grade.





# School Oral Health Program

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- The Maine Oral Health Programs currently funds 240 schools throughout Maine with small grants to promote oral health education and provide a weekly fluoride mouthrinse.
  - Some schools also receive additional grant money to provide dental sealants to second graders.



# School Oral Health Program

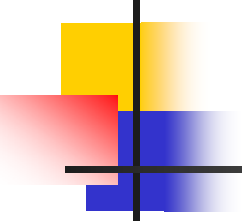
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- School-based oral health services can help make fluoride and dental sealants accessible to children from families with low incomes.





# School Oral Health Program

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- Fluoride is a natural compound that is found in groundwater, soil and plants.
  - Fluoride benefits can be obtained in two ways.
  - Systemically: drinking water and supplements.
  - Topically: mouthrinses, gels and varnishes.

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- Fluoride is “nature’s way of preventing tooth decay.”
- Fluoride protects teeth from tooth decay and help remineralize weak areas of enamel.





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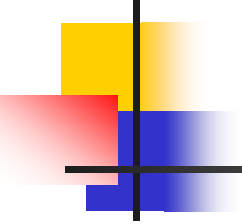
The importance of fluoride mouthrinse:

- It is an effective way to reduce decay at **no cost to parents.**
- The cost per child is about \$2.50 for the school year.
- Fluoride has been proven to be a safe, inexpensive way of preventing tooth decay.



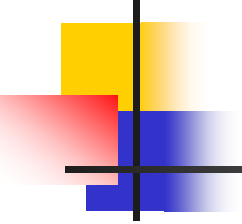


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- Is fluoride mouth rinse safe?
  - Yes! The Food and Drug Administration has approved the 0.2% weekly sodium fluoride mouthrinse as a safe and effective means of preventing tooth decay.



# School Oral Health Program

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- The weekly fluoride mouth rinse can only be administered with parental or guardian permission.
  - The weekly fluoride rinse is always done under direct supervision of someone who has had fluoride training.
  - The fluoride mouth rinse is not swallowed.
  - There are no known adverse effects associated with this procedure.



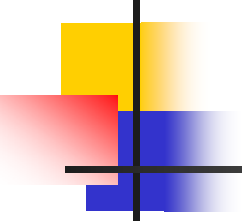
# Access and Barriers to Dental Services

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- Lack of or insufficient dental insurance
- Limited income
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of education of the importance of oral health
- Low dentist to patient ratio (geographic)
- Dentists not participating with MaineCare
- Low MaineCare reimbursement rates for dental services; broken appointments

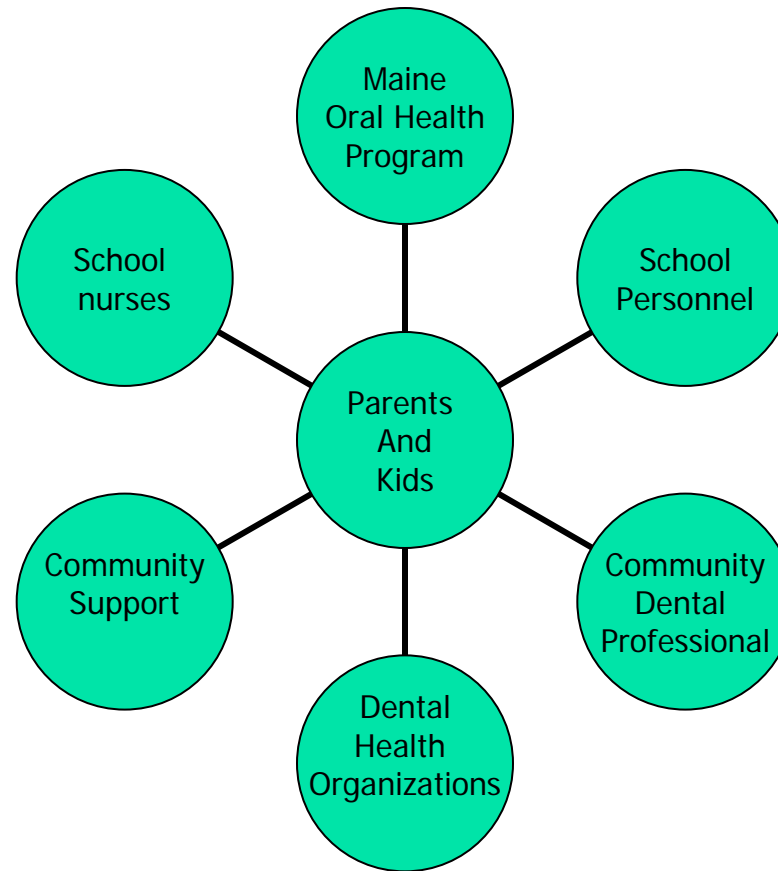


# School Oral Health Program

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- Oral health education is a key component in the School Oral Health Program
  - The Oral Health Program will assist school administrators in proper curriculum, activities and technical assistance



# School Oral Health Program Partnerships





# School Oral Health Program Partnerships

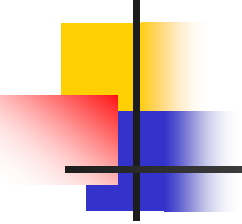


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- The Oral Health Program needs support from school personnel, administrators and educators to promote the program.
- School nurses work very hard implementing oral health into their daily schedules.



# School Oral Health Program



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" You cannot educate a child who is not healthy, and you cannot keep a child healthy who is not educated."

~ Jocelyn Elders, Former US Surgeon General



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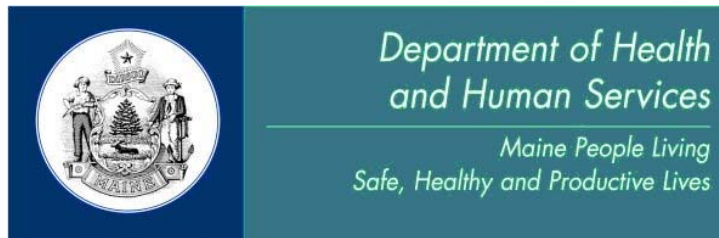


For more information on Oral Health  
please contact

The Maine Oral Health Program

Maine CDC/ DHHS

287-3121



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