



# “Brushing Up on Oral Health”



Michigan Department of Community Health  
Oral Health Quarterly Newsletter  
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\*Before picture of tooth with pits and fissures

\* After picture of tooth with dental sealant



## Spot Light on Dental Sealants:

Dental sealants are proven to be a safe and effective way to prevent dental decay. Sealants are a thin plastic covering that goes on top of the molar teeth to “seal” out bacteria. The molar teeth are highly susceptible to decay because they naturally have deep grooves that easily house bacteria. The grooves are so microscopic that even toothbrush bristles are too large to fit into them for daily cleaning, but of course bacteria has no problem at all gaining access. If a sealant is placed over the grooves then bacteria stays out and those grooves are protected. Dental sealant placement is quick and easy; the material is simply painted on with a brush and hardened into place. As long as the sealant stays in place on the tooth then those surfaces will be protected from developing cavities.

~Jill Moore RDH, BSDH, MHA, MDCH Dental Sealant Coordinator~



Sealants are placed after an oral health assessment and cleaning by a dental hygienist in the school-based Seal! Michigan program.





# School Children and Oral Health



## What is a PA161: Public Dental Prevention Program?

This program allows the use of dental hygienists in collaboration with a supervising dentist to provide preventive dental services to underserved populations in Michigan. This program addresses access to oral health care by utilizing dental hygienists in schools, Head Starts and long term care facilities, to name a few, and provide cleanings, fluorides and sealants to those most unable to find care. PA161 programs and providers are especially needed for a school-based dental sealant program.



**SEAL!**  
**MICHIGAN**

SEAL! Michigan is the school-based dental sealant program that is administered by MDCH to provide free dental sealants to thousands of children annually.

The SEAL! Michigan program is supported by grant funds, and runs on a three year funding cycle. The next RFP will be released on February 1, 2013, and will provide funding for 2014, 2015, and 2016, as funds allow. Please check the [www.michigan.gov/oralhealth](http://www.michigan.gov/oralhealth) website on February 1, 2013 for the full Request for Funds Proposal (RFP).

## Study Links Obesity With More Cavities in Poor Children

Dentistry Today – November 14, 2012

Obesity and dental cavities become worse as impoverished children grow older, according to a [new study](#) (*Journal of Pediatric Health Care*). Researchers determined that as body mass index went up as children got older, the numbers of cavities increased. The lack of access to healthy food, the inability to refrigerate food, and the lack of running water are just some of the issues impoverished people face, along with the inability to receive dental treatment or the inability to secure transportation to the treatment.



## MyChildrensTeeth.org Resources for Adolescents

### American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD)

AAPD offers resources on adolescent oral health including links to related AAPD policies and guidelines, and articles and brochures on topics such as: drug use and oral health; the dangerous oral health repercussions of facial piercing; and the responsibility of pediatric dentists to help identify those adolescents who may be at higher risk for suicide.

## Contact Information

[oralhealth@michigan.gov](mailto:oralhealth@michigan.gov)

Watch for our next  
Oral Health Newsletter  
coming in May!

[www.michigan.gov/oralhealth](http://www.michigan.gov/oralhealth)

The Michigan  
Oral Health Program

Building a Stronger,  
Healthier Michigan

Now that's something to SMILE about!



## Prevention is the key!!

- Early Dental Visits
- Fluoride
- Dental Sealants