Maximizing the impact of oral health in schools: Putting it all together
Poor oral health can have a detrimental effect on children’s quality of life, their performance at school, and their success later in life.

- World Health Organization
Tooth decay is **preventable** and ensuring that students have the preventive oral health services they need in school is important in helping them stay healthy and ready to learn.
Most Common Disease in Childhood

- About 1 of 5 (20%) children aged 5 to 11 years have at least one untreated decayed tooth.¹
- 1 of 7 (13%) adolescents aged 12 to 19 years have at least one untreated decayed tooth.²
- Children from low-income families have twice the rate of tooth decay compared to children from higher income households.³

Poor oral health is associated with increased absenteeism and poor test scores
1 in 14 children between the ages of 5 and 14 have a *dental injury*
2013-14
Have had dental caries in primary or permanent teeth

Age 3-5 29.7%
Age 6-9 51.7%
Age 13-15 49.9%

Healthy People 2010

Healthy People 2010 outlines a series of benchmarks for children and their oral health status. Included in these benchmarks are the following:

- 21-1. Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents who have dental caries experience in their primary or permanent teeth.
Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC)

10 Components

- Physical education and physical activity
- Nutrition environment and services
- Health education
- Social and emotional school climate
- Physical environment
- Health services
- Counseling, psychological and social services
- Employee wellness
- Community involvement
- Family engagement
Research has indicated possible associations between chronic oral infections and:

- Diabetes
- Heart Disease
- Lung Disease
- Stroke
- Low Birthweight
- Premature Births

Regina Benjamin Surgeon General 2010

- Oral health improves with good blood flow
- Lifelong physical activity decreases chronic disease
- Relationship between oral and physical health
- Promote the use of personal and protective equipment which improves oral health
Nutrition, Environment, and Services

- Good nutrition promotes healthy teeth and oral health
- Healthy school lunches
- School Garden Program
- Fluoridated tap water first for thirst
- Water fountains with faucets
- Healthy snack & vending machines practices
- Healthy party practices
- Nutrition Education
Health Education

- National Health Education Standards
- Personal practices
- Healthy lifestyles: Tobacco, drug and alcohol education
- Nutrition
- Best practices
- Science, public health, personal health
- Student, family and community
- Trusted Websites and resources
- Comprehensive education PK-12
Effective Health Education Curriculum

- Teaching functional health information (essential knowledge)
- Shaping personal values and beliefs that support healthy behaviors
- Shaping group norms that value a healthy lifestyle
- Developing the essential health skills necessary to adopt, practice, and maintain health-enhancing behaviors
Social & Emotional School Climate

- Climate accepting of individual needs and good personal habits
- Climate that encourages care of the whole child
- Climate that promotes skill sets that teach students to reach for healthy behaviors
- Promotion and establishment of good oral habits in the school setting
Physical Environment

- A safe playground & campus
- Safe play
- Tobacco and drug free
- Safe climate
Employee Wellness

- Educate staff on oral health issues and standards of care
- Promote a dental home and regular care
- Provide insurance for oral health care
- Promote role modeling
- Teach and promote good nutrition
- Teach about healthy beverages and promote water bottles in the school
- Drug & alcohol treatment programs and tobacco cessation programs
- Encourage and provide education on the personal use of mouth guards and bike helmets
- Provide information on personal care in dental emergencies
Community Involvement

- Fluoridated water or topical fluoride application programs
- School Based Health Centers or dental mobile units
- Programs to promote dental homes
- Advocacy for dental insurance that covers the needs of children
- Dental sealant programs
- Support of tobacco cessation programs
- Support for programs that reduce unintentional dental injuries including in sports and PE programs
- Include oral health in health fairs
Family Engagement

- Integrate a family component into health education
- Include family in school health activities
- When working with families consider health literacy and culturally appropriate approaches.
- Educate families about what current recommendations are for dental care
- Encourage vaccination for HPV
Family Engagement

- Provide families with websites and resources for trusted information
- Include families in oral health safety programs
- Provide information and referral to appropriate care
- Help families to understand and provide good nutrition to their children
- Encourage the whole family to seek dental care
I feel that we can't educate children who are not healthy, and we can't keep them healthy if they're not educated. There has to be a marriage between health and education.

Jocelyn Elder
Resources


4) [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/wssc/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/wssc/index.htm)

5) [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/)

6) [wssc/pdf/wssc_fact_sheet_508c.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/shi/index.htm)

7) [https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/childrens-oral-health/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/childrens-oral-health/index.html)

8) [https://www.cdhp.org/state-of-dental-health](https://www.cdhp.org/state-of-dental-health)

9) [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/shi/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/shi/index.htm)
Thank You.

Healthy Mouths ➤ Healthy People ➤ Strong Communities

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