



Have You Heard?

Kindergarteners are required to have a dental screening. MDHHS partners with local health departments to provide these screenings at no cost to families.

Dental-related problems prevent kids from reaching their full learning potential. To prevent this, Michigan created the **Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program (KOHA)** to improve school readiness and raise families' awareness of the importance of good oral health.



Children's oral health is a key public health priority. Early detection of dental problems and connecting children to needed care will help children succeed.



Poor dental health affects attendance and grades. Kids with poor dental health are 3x more likely to miss school because of dental problems.



Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease in children. Almost half of Michigan Head Start children have tooth decay and close to one-third have untreated decay.

What Should School Districts Do?

- 1** **Notify** parents of the dental screening requirement; **provide** information about where the screening can be done including dates and times of on-site screening events
- 2** **Communicate** the importance of oral health; **encourage** parents to have their child's dental screening completed.
- 3** **Collaborate** with the local health department to offer on-site screenings.
- 4** **Submit** required school dental screening data to MDHHS.

Common Questions

How will students benefit from having a dental assessment?

Students benefit from having a dental assessment (screening) because it will identify those who may have dental-related issues and connect them to needed care. Oral health problems can cause pain and make it difficult for children to eat, speak, sleep, or even socialize, all of which can prevent children from reaching their full learning potential.

How can a parent get their child screened?

Local health departments provide no-cost screenings before the start of kindergarten at places like preschools, school registration events, and community events and within schools during the kindergarten school year. Or, they can take their child to their family dentist to have the screening done there.

How can our school assist?

Schools should work with the [local health department](#) to offer on-site screening events and should notify parents of the screening requirement through various distribution channels such as parent letters, registration packets, and social media. Schools should provide information on where the screenings can be done including any dates and times of on-site screenings. Schools can also assist by raising awareness among children and families about the importance of good oral health.

How do we report our data?

All Michigan schools are required by law to report their dental screening data to the State. Schools that receive proof of screening from a parent/guardian or local health department should select the “Dental Screened” checkbox in MCIR. Selecting this box in MCIR indicates a student was screened and fulfills the school’s reporting requirement to the State.



For more information

Contact your local health department or
MDHHS-KOHA@michigan.gov



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