

**Wood County
Responds to
Surgeon General’s
Dental Care
Report With
“Healthy Smiles”
Program**

Healthy Smiles for Wood County			
	2002-2003 School Year	2003-2004 School Year	2004-2005 School Year
Number of Students Screened	404	715	793
% of Students Identified with Unmet Needs	31%	26%	27%
Number of Students Receiving Dental Sealants	184	389	415

Key Facts

- In 2002, Wood County Health Department requested a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) review to assess the number of dentists in Wood County who provide dental care to low income, uninsured or under-insured families.
- 60% of students screened in the 2004-2005 school year were identified as needing sealants; 88% of those students received sealants from Healthy Smiles for Wood County.
- 27% of the students screened in the 2004-2005 school year, had decay present and were identified with unmet dental care needs.

Why is this Information Important?

Tooth decay is the single most common disease in children, and can cause diminished growth in toddlers, especially if nutritional needs are compromised. More than 51 million school hours are lost each year because of dental related illness. Dental health and access to care has become one of the greatest public health concerns.

Dental Health

Nationally, dental problems are most commonly found among children ages 5-17, disproportionately affecting children from low-income families.

Healthy Smiles for Wood County, the only school based sealant program within the county, identifies a high percentage of children with unmet dental needs each year. A significant number of these children and their families are low-income and have experienced barriers to care, having limited area dentists providing care to their population.

Individuals can do a lot to promote good oral health. Preventive activities such as brushing, flossing, fluoride treatments, dental sealants, eating healthy foods, and regular check-ups all help to keep teeth clean and healthy.

Sources: Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services; Healthy Smiles for Wood County; Oral Health America