



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health
FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health / CEO
DATE: 2018 September 20

2017-2018 SCHOOL-BASED DENTAL SCREENING RESULTS

Recommendation

It is recommended that Report No. 058-18 Re: “2017-2018 School-Based Dental Screening Results” be received for information.

Key Points

- MLHU continues to work on strategies to improve oral health outcomes among children in the community, and to increase awareness of the School-Based Dental Screening and Fluoride Varnish programs.

Middlesex-London 2016–17 School-Based Dental Screening Results

During the 2017–18 school year, the Health Unit screened 16,038 students (77%) in 133 elementary schools through the School-Based Dental Screening Program. For 3,450 students (17%), parents did not consent to screening. In addition, 1,114 students (5%) were absent on the day(s) that screening was happening at their school. The percentage of excluded and absent students is similar to the previous year’s percentage. The percentages of Junior Kindergarten (JK), Senior Kindergarten (SK) and Grade 2 (Gr 2) students screened who were caries-free (i.e., have never had cavities or the removal or filling of a tooth because of tooth decay) were 77%, 68% and 55%, respectively. These percentages are similar to the previous year: 77%, 68% and 57%, respectively.

The Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry collects surveillance data for participating health units in Ontario. The percentage of children in Ontario that were surveyed is 57%. For all surveyed children, the percentages of JK, SK and Gr 2 students who were caries-free were 75%, 65% and 54%, respectively. For all children in the South West region (Grey Bruce, Chatham-Kent, Windsor-Essex, Norfolk, Elgin, Oxford, Middlesex, Perth, Huron and Grey Bruce), the percentages of JK, SK and Gr 2 students who were caries-free were 77%, 65% and 52%, respectively. Children surveyed in Middlesex-London have similar rates of decay in comparison to Ontario and regions in South West. In the past, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) has not required Public Health Units (PHUs) to collect surveillance data, making it challenging to obtain province wide information. However, the MOHLTC has now mandated health units to collect surveillance data for JK students (decayed, missing and filled teeth) starting in the 2018-2019 school year. This data will become available to PHUs in the future.

When screening for school intensity level, it was found that only 7% of Grade 2 students screened had two or more teeth with tooth decay. Of the students screened, 1,776 (11.1%) were found to have urgent dental needs, making them clinically eligible to receive Healthy Smiles Ontario Essential and Emergency Care funding for their dental care. This is similar to the previous school year findings. The Health Unit continues to work with school boards to increase awareness of the School-Based Dental Screening and Fluoride Varnish programs. The full Oral Health Report can be found in [Appendix A](#).

This report was prepared by the Oral Health Team, Healthy Living Division.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Mackie'.

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Medical Officer of Health / CEO