

Children Experiencing Tooth Decay

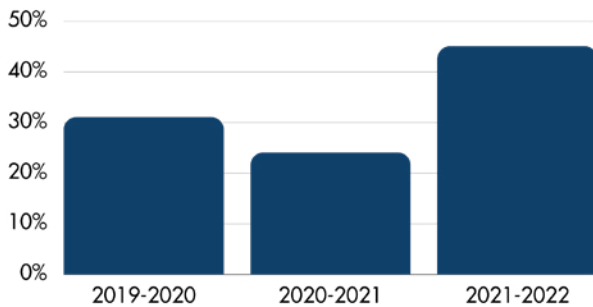
North Dakota school-based sealant program finds children ages five and under are experiencing high rates of tooth decay

The school-based sealant program (SEAL!ND) is managed by the North Dakota Oral Health Program. The program provides dental screenings, fluoride varnish application, and dental sealants for students in grades K-12.

Program evaluation data from before the COVID-19 pandemic through the 2021-2022 school year demonstrate pandemic impacts, and an urgent need to increase dental visit rates among children ages five and under.

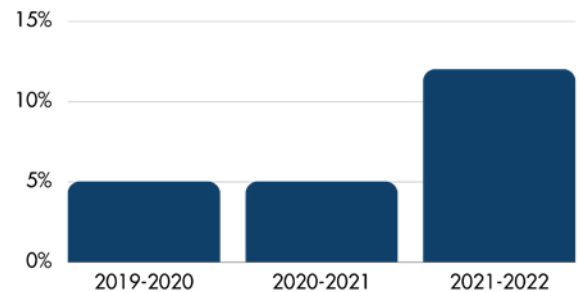
Kindergartners Participating in SEAL!ND Experiencing Untreated Dental Decay

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, 31% of the children starting kindergarten had some level of untreated dental decay (at least one cavity). During the 2021-2022 school year, 45% of the kids entering kindergarten had untreated decay.



Kindergartners Participating in SEAL!ND Needing URGENT Dental Care

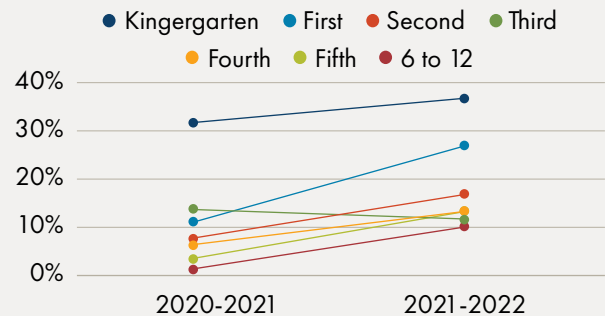
Higher rates of untreated decay relate to a greater percentage of students needing urgent dental care. During the 2021-2022 school year, **1 in every 8 kindergartners had pain, infection, abscess or large decay that required an immediate dental referral.**



Kindergartners Participating in SEAL!ND who had NOT Been to a Dentist

Visiting a dental provider for regular cleanings and exams can prevent decay and teach good dental hygiene habits. In North Dakota, a large percentage of kindergartners begin school with no dental visit.

During the 2021-2022 school year, 37% of kindergartners (more than one in three) had NOT been to a dentist.



Learn more about SEAL!ND at: hhs.nd.gov/SEALND

For questions on evaluation data, email Shawnda.schroeder@und.edu