



## WHAT'S NEW FOR KINDERGARTEN?

Michigan passed a law to give children the opportunity to receive a dental assessment prior to starting school, called the Michigan Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program (KOHA). MI KOHA helps ensure each student is healthy and ready for a successful school year!

# TEETH COUNT!



To make sure your child is ready for school, District Health Department #10's (DHD10's) Registered Dental Hygienist will be conducting on-site dental assessments. After the assessment is completed, your child will bring home a letter with any findings.

### What will a parent or guardian need to do?

- If your child(ren) will not be present on the day the school has coordinated DHD10's on-site oral health assessment, then you can have the MDHHS Health Appraisal form completed by your dentist. To get your form, contact your school.
- Need help or have no insurance? Visit [www.dhd10.org/dental-health/](http://www.dhd10.org/dental-health/) today!
- After the dentist fills out their portion of the form, bring the completed Health Appraisal to your school.



- 1 Childhood tooth decay (or cavities) is the most common illness in MI children.  
Children who have poor oral health miss more school and receive lower grades than children who don't.
- 2 Children with cavities have difficulty eating, concentrating in class, and talking.
- 3 The assessment, or screening, is a quick visual inspection of the teeth and mouth to check for signs of dental disease.
- 4



## GET THE FACTS



### What do teeth have to do with school?

Dental cavities are Michigan's #1 most common childhood illness and cavities can cause pain. Cavities can prevent kids from eating, sleeping, developing proper speech, playing, and learning. They can also lead to social and behavioral problems. It is important to screen kids for health issues before they start school so kids can come ready to learn.

### Is there a difference between a dental exam and a dental assessment?

In Section V of the MDHHS Health Appraisal form, it asks if a child received a dental exam or dental assessment. This is language specific to dental providers, a dentist completes a dental exam, and dental hygienists/dental therapists will complete a dental assessment. You only need to have one dental provider complete the screening.

### Do my older kids have to have a dental screening too?

This program is specifically for students entering Kindergarten, but it is highly recommended that all kids see a dentist twice a year.

### Are other screenings completed for students?

Yes, it is Michigan law that students are also screened for hearing and vision. Hearing and vision screenings ensure students can see and hear in the classrooms to learn better.

### What if my child has cavities?

If you learn your child has a cavity or cavities from your parent letter, they will need to have the cavities filled. A cavity doesn't stop growing on its own, it will need to be treated by a dentist. The person who completes your student's dental assessment will be able to help with a dental referral or an appointment for follow up care.

### What if I don't have a dentist?

At DHD10, our Registered Dental Hygienist can be scheduled to complete your oral health assessment, or we can help you find a local dental provider. To learn more visit [www.dhd10.org/dental-health/](http://www.dhd10.org/dental-health/) today.

### What if I can't afford to take my child to the dentist?

There are a variety of ways to have kids in Michigan be seen by a dentist or dental professional. At DHD10, we offer a Registered Dental Hygienist who can assist you in finding the care you need. You can learn more at [www.dhd10.org/dental-health/](http://www.dhd10.org/dental-health/) or contact our oral health coordinator.

A parent or guardian can also consider enrolling Michigan's Healthy Kids Dental Program (HKD). Across the state of Michigan, Healthy Kids Dental is available to children who have Medicaid and are under the age of 21.

To find a provider and learn more, visit:  
[michigan.gov/mdhhs/assistance-programs/healthcare/childrenteens/hkdental](http://michigan.gov/mdhhs/assistance-programs/healthcare/childrenteens/hkdental)

