



**District Health Department #10**  
Healthy People, Healthy Communities

## DID YOU KNOW?

Michigan passed a law to ensure kids enrolling into their first year of school have the opportunity to receive an oral health assessment prior to starting school.



# What can School Districts / Preschools do to help?

1

### NOTIFY PARENTS

Before school starts or in your Kindergarten Registration packets, send a parent notification letter home explaining Michigan's New Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment (KOHA) Program.

2

### PROVIDE ACCESS

Work in partnership with our District Health Department's (DHD10) Oral Health Coordinator to schedule and offer on-site oral assessment days. Assessments will be completed during school hours for those who have not turned in their completed Health Appraisal.

3

### RAISE AWARENESS

Help raise awareness about the relationship between oral health and overall health, to ensure that all children are healthy and ready for school. Dental decay is the number one childhood disease and the leading cause of children being absent or inattentive in school.

4

### COMPILE DATA

Encourage parents to have their kindergartner's oral health assessment completed. Send a complete Oral Health Assessment Report to MDHHS once the database has been developed.

## ABOUT MI'S KOHA

Childhood tooth decay (or cavities) is the most common illness in MI children. Dental related issues prevent children from reaching their full learning potential in the classroom. To prevent this, Michigan created the Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment (KOHA) to improve school readiness and raise families' awareness of oral health's importance.



**Poor dental health affects attendance and grades.** Children with poor dental health are nearly 3 times more likely to be absent from school.



**Poor dental health drains school funding.** The nation's Department of Education reports dental-related absences cost public schools an average of \$15+ million annually.



**We want all children to succeed.** The negative impact that absences have on learning is greatest among the most vulnerable students - low-income children and English language learners



## GET THE FACTS



### Why was Public Act 261 signed into law?

Although fully preventable with access to a dentist and education, dental cavities remain the #1 chronic childhood disease and are responsible for 51 million missed school hours, nationally, each year. Children with poor oral health are 3 times more likely to miss school due to pain and infection linked to dental cavities. Tooth decay is a significant public health problem in Michigan. More than 1 in 3 Michigan Head Start Children (35%) have already experienced tooth decay, and almost 1 out of 4 Head Start Children (22%) in Michigan have untreated tooth decay (MDHHS, 2018). Students in Michigan need healthy teeth and to be pain free to ensure they can achieve their highest individual learning potential while in school. The Michigan Dental Association and other advocates helped promote the passage of the bill.

### What will happen with the data collected and how will this help students in Michigan?

The law states that it is a requirement for school administrators to submit a summary of any dental reports to the MDHHS on a form provided by the department. In Public Act 87 of 21, Section 620, funds are allocated for a dental oral assessment database, however Michigan's database is still in the development stage. Once launched, the database will help implement the dental oral assessment program. Both our health department and MDHHS will provide more information, including training, as the database is developed and implemented.

### How can your school assess with this law?

In collaboration with us, your local Health Department, we'll work together to schedule on-site Oral Health assessment days. Assessments will be completed during school hours, just like hearing and vision screenings to provide convenience to parents and caregivers. If a day is chosen outside of normal school day/hours, parents will need to be encouraged to bring their child to the school to have their assessment completed on-site (i.e., Kindergarten Round Up, Back to School Nights, community events hosted by the school, etc.). DHD10 will also be hosting summer events at all of our health department locations to provide oral health assessments.

### What if a parent or caregiver doesn't have a dentist and asks how they can get the screening done?

Help guide the parents and caregivers in the knowledge that DHD10 provides full opportunities to complete the required KOHA right on-site during special events. Parents can learn more at [www.dhd10.org/dental-health/](http://www.dhd10.org/dental-health/).

You can also consider assisting families with enrolling their student in Michigan's Health Kids Dental program by visiting their website: [michigan.gov/mdhhs/assistance-programs/healthcare/childrenteens/hkdental](http://michigan.gov/mdhhs/assistance-programs/healthcare/childrenteens/hkdental).

## READY TO SCHEDULE YOUR SCHOOL'S KOHA?

Contact our District Health Department #10 Oral Health Coordinator today!



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Oral Health Coordinator

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