



KINDERGARTEN DENTAL SCREENING

What Parents Should Know

What is the Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Program (KOHA)?

Michigan law (Public Act 316 of 2023) requires Oakland County Health Division (OCHD) to provide no cost dental screenings to all children enrolled in their first year of school, either Kindergarten or 1st grade.

Screening occurs in most Oakland County public, private and charter schools and preschools and at the Health Division offices. Children may be screened up to 6 months prior to the start of enrolling in school or during the school year through May 31.

How are screenings performed?

A dentist or dental hygienist will perform a simple, quick screening by looking into your child's mouth and noting what they see. The dentist or hygienist will wear a mask and gloves and only single-use disposable supplies for screenings.

Why screen children's teeth?

Dental health problems can make learning hard for children. It can cause pain, difficulty eating and loss of sleep. Students benefit from having a dental screening because it will identify if they have issues that need dental care and connect them to that care.

Why do I need to have my child screened if they have baby teeth?

Baby teeth can be in your child's mouth until they are 12 years old. Adult molars come in at 6 years old. Cavities (tooth decay) are a bacterial infection that can spread to other teeth and cause those to develop cavities. A cavity on a baby tooth can also affect the developing adult tooth.

What are the signs of dental problems in a child?

- **Visible signs:** Tooth discoloration, swollen or red gums, swelling in jaw or cheeks, and cracks or fractures
- **Behavioral signs:** Crying when eating or drinking, food avoidance, frequent waking up at night, and favoring one side of the mouth
- **Other signs:** Sensitivity to sweets, headaches, and ear pain

Will I be notified if a problem is found during my child's screening?

Yes, you will be notified. If your child requires immediate attention we will call to see if you need help finding a dentist or resources.

How will I know when my child is screened in school?

Schools are responsible for communicating to parents when screenings are scheduled. All children are screened unless the school office is notified otherwise by a parent/guardian.

Can I see my private dentist?

Yes, your child may see your family dentist for the screening.

Where Can I Get More Information?

Call 248-858-1306 or email OCHD-Dental@oakgov.com
oakgov.info/dental • michigan.gov/mddhhs/

