Dental Sealant Program

The Hawaii Keiki – Hawaii Dental Service (HDS) Dental Sealant Program was developed in 2019 as a partnership between Hawaii Keiki: Healthy and Ready to Learn (HK) and the HDS Foundation. Dental Sealant Program staff collaborate with the Hawaii Department of Education (DOE) to identify high need Title I elementary schools, and work with school administrators to organize dental screening and sealant days.

The Dental Sealant Program is provided at no cost to families and is supported by funds provided by the HDS Foundation and UH Manoa Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing. Parents must provide written consent to participate in this no cost program. The Program is school-based with screening and sealant application provided at the school to minimize the loss of class time.

Goal

The goal of the Dental Sealant Program is to improve the oral and overall health of children by increasing the number of children who receive oral health assessments, education and dental sealants within designated Title I schools.

In 2015, the Hawaii Smiles report documented that children in Hawaii have the highest prevalence of dental decay in the nation. In addition, more than 60% of children statewide did not have sealants on their permanent molars, increasing their risk for dental decay. Children with dental decay are known to miss more school days, have difficulty concentrating in school due to pain, and may also have difficulty eating and poor self-esteem compared to their peers without dental decay.
The Dental Sealant Program is staffed by licensed dentists and dental hygienists. They provide each child with a dental screening followed by the application of dental sealants, as ordered by the dentist. All children receive individual oral health education, a toothbrush, toothpaste, and dental floss.

Children in need of additional dental services will be referred to their dentist and/or a provider in their community if they do not have a designated dentist. The Dental Sealant Program staff will evaluate the program on an on-going basis and will provide data to the DOE, HDS Foundation and the community through annual reports.

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