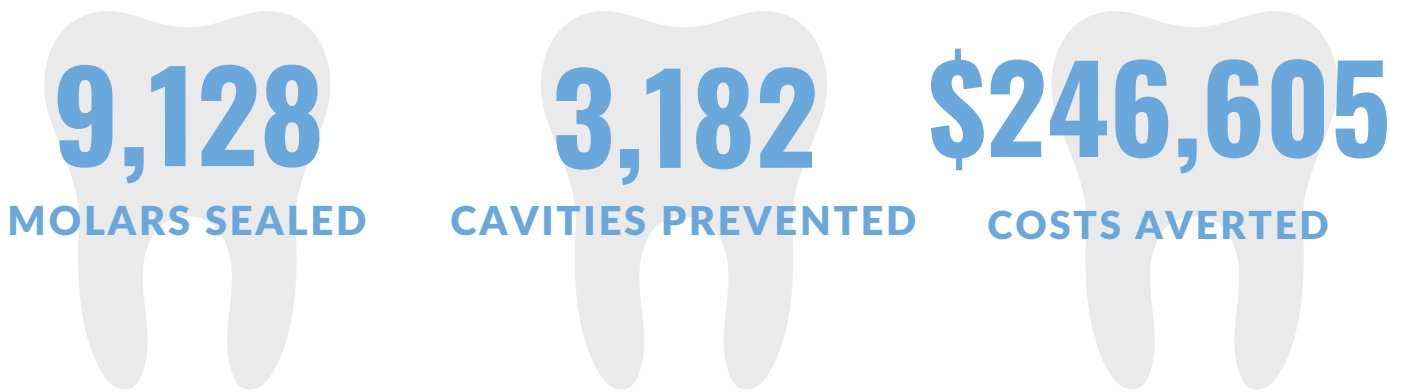


# SEAL! ND

Seal!ND targets under-served students and delivers dental screening, oral health education, dental sealants, and fluoride varnish. Seal!ND is a school-based dental sealant program that provides preventive oral health to low-income and under-served children. The program has improved the oral health of youth in North Dakota by preventing cavities and avoiding costs associated with restorative care.

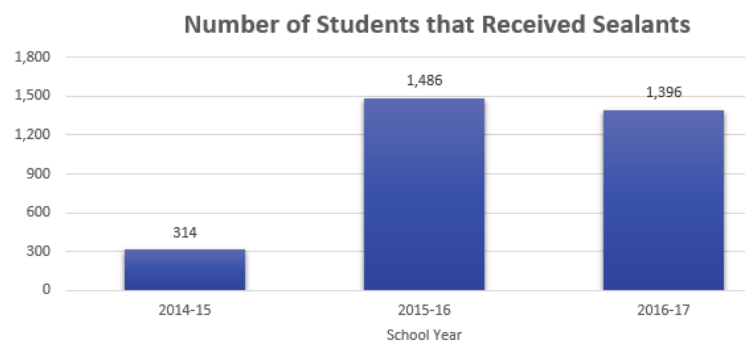
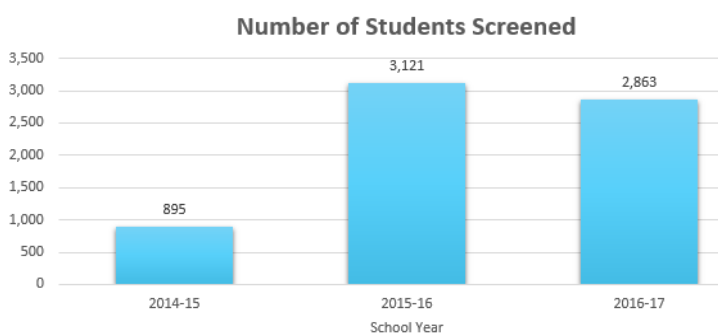
The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) Oral Health Program (OHP) is committed to improving the oral health of North Dakotans through prevention and education by using innovative and cost-effective approaches to promote oral health care.

## 2014-15 to 2016-17 School Year Totals



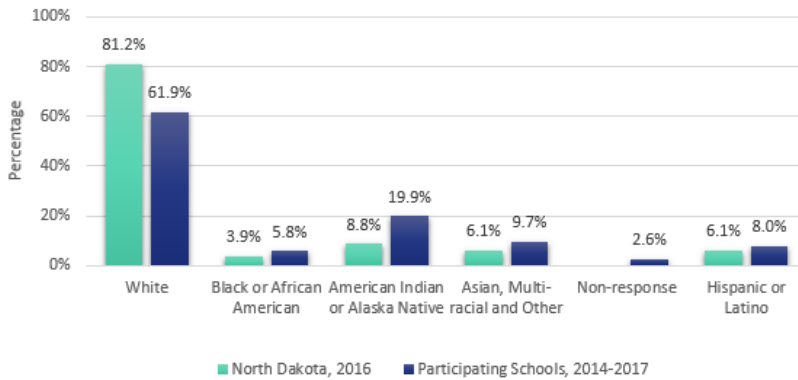
Seal!ND works closely with the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to identify schools with 45 percent or more students enrolled in the free and reduced-fee lunch program. Children from low-income households are typically at a higher risk for tooth decay (cavities) and may lack access to dental care (CDC, 2017).

Seal!ND has expanded considerably since the 2014-15 school year. In 2015-16, 40 schools participated in the program, which is up from 18 schools in the previous school year. The number of children screened also increased from 895 children screened in 2014-15 to 3,121 in 2015-16 and nearly 3 thousand again in 2016-17.



# STUDENTS SERVED

**Population by Race and Hispanic Origin for Children in North Dakota, and in Participating Schools**



One of the goals of the school-based sealant program is to reach children that are high-risk based on socioeconomic status, which frequently includes racial minorities. Over the course of the three-year study period, participating minority students are represented at levels exceeding the overall statewide average. This would suggest the program is effectively targeting low-income and under-served populations.

## 2014-15 to 2016-17 School Year Totals

### MOLARS SEALED

Over the three-year study period a total of 6,879 children were screened. After these screenings a total of 9,128 molars were sealed through the dental sealant program.

### CAVITIES PREVENTED

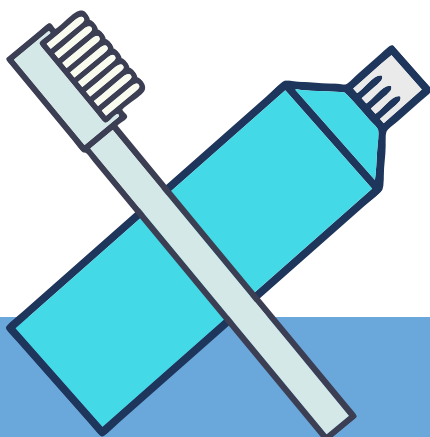
In just three years, Seal!ND has helped prevent 3,182 cavities in permanent molars in North Dakota students, and referred 1,747 students to dental providers for treatment.

### COSTS AVERTED

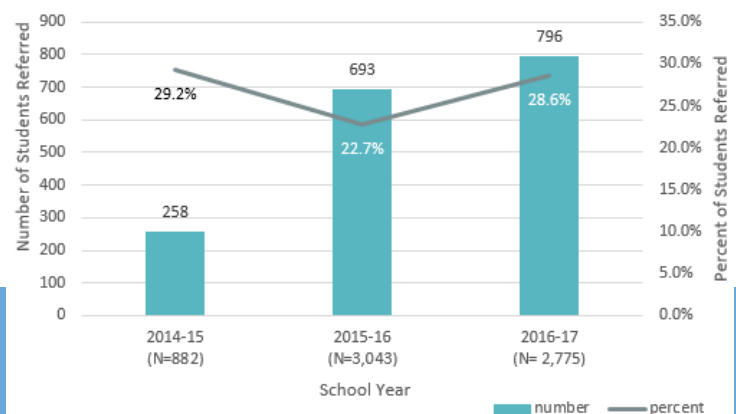
The average cost to fill a typical cavity was based on North Dakota Medicaid reimbursement rates. As of July 1, 2016, the rate was \$77.50. Total averted costs over the three-year study period were \$246,605.

Preventing cavities not only saves money by avoiding health care costs, but helps students do better in school. Children with poor oral health are more than three times as likely to miss school due to dental pain (Jackson, 2011).

Seal!ND also provides dental screenings to identify students with untreated cavities and refers them to local providers for treatment. In 2014-15, 262 students, approximately 30 percent of students screened, had untreated cavities. In 2015-16 and 2016-17, the number of students identified as having untreated cavities increased. While the absolute number of students referred for treatment increased to 693 in 2015-16 and 796 in 2016-17, the percentage of students screened and referred for care declined to 23 percent in 2015-16, then returned to 29 percent in 2016-17.



**Number and Percentage of Students Screened That Were Referred for Dental Care**



# COMMENTS FROM SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

School administrators indicated high levels of satisfaction with their experience with the school-based dental sealant program. Respondents nearly unanimously agreed that public health hygienists were well informed about the dental sealant program and that school personnel had sufficient information to promote and administer the program. Respondents also indicated high levels of satisfaction with the public hygienists that provided services at the respondent's school.

"The program is a huge plus for our school. We have a high level of poverty, and we have children who don't get to the dentist like they should. If programs like this weren't coming into the schools, they would have no dental assistance."

"Need to get the word out on this program, it is a great opportunity for some parents."

"I was very pleased with the total program."

"Your team works so well with our staff and students. Wonderful program."

"We thought this was a very good idea. I believe the parents also thought so."



"I enjoyed working with the program. It also gave some hands-on practice for some senior girls who were planning on going into the dental field."

# SEAL! ND

## For More Information

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### For Full Text:

Hodur, Nancy M., and Gao, Xiangping "Coco." 2018. "Program Evaluation: North Dakota Department of Health Seal!ND 2016-2017." Center for Social Research Report No. 102. Center for Social Research, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

Available at: [https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/csr/2016-2017\\_School\\_Sealant\\_Program\\_Survey\\_Report.pdf](https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/csr/2016-2017_School_Sealant_Program_Survey_Report.pdf)

### References:

CDC. 2017. "Best Practice Approaches for State and Community Oral Health Programs", Centers for Disease Control and Prevention publications, update February 2017, <http://www.astdd.org/docs/sealant-bpar-update-02-2017-final.pdf>

Jackson, Stephanie L., William F. Vann, Jr., Johnathan B. Kotch, Bhavna T. Pahal and Jessica Y. Lee. 2011. "Impact of Poor Oral Health on Children's School Attendance and Performance". American Journal of Public Health, October 2011; 101(10) 1900-1906, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3222359/>



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