



# WEST VIRGINIA CHILDREN'S ORAL HEALTH SURVEY 2010-2011

## Baseline data collection to strengthen the oral health of West Virginia's children

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY & THE WV DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES, BUREAU  
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, OFFICE OF MATERNAL, CHILD & FAMILY HEALTH, ORAL HEALTH PROGRAM

*Tooth decay (dental caries) affects children in the United States more than any other chronic infectious disease. Untreated tooth decay causes pain and infections that may lead to problems with eating, speaking, and learning. The good news is that tooth decay and other oral diseases in children are preventable. The combination of dental sealants and fluoride has the potential to nearly eliminate tooth decay in school-age children. (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)*

- **Significance:** This project represents the first statewide oral health surveillance data collection of its kind in West Virginia's history. Oral health surveillance provides a representative snapshot of children's oral health in West Virginia. The data collected will bring West Virginia in line with national protocol, and will strengthen the State's ability to monitor progress in addressing the oral health needs of West Virginia.
- **Methodology:** Information was collected on third grade and kindergarten children in West Virginia, stratified by economic indicators. A random sampling of schools was generated by Bureau for Public Health epidemiologists.
  - Twenty-four schools from 15 counties across West Virginia participated in the screenings.
  - The screenings were conducted by a brief visual assessment, where licensed dental professionals looked into a child's mouth using a penlight and, if necessary, a tongue depressor or mirror.
  - Screeners looked for **existing restorations (fillings), sealants and obvious decay.**





# West Virginia's first-ever statewide oral health survey provides essential information about the oral health of our children, and can guide future practice in our State.

West Virginia's results on caries experience and treatment compare favorably with both national baselines (*1999-2004 US Department of Health & Human Services Health Indicators Warehouse*) and federal Healthy People target objectives ([HealthyPeople.gov](http://HealthyPeople.gov)). However, the results also suggest that the practice of applying dental sealants to prevent tooth decay in 8-year olds, while ahead of national baselines, falls short of the national 2010 Healthy People community target for use of dental sealants (to increase to 50% of 8-year old children).

The following table presents the data from the West Virginia surveillance:

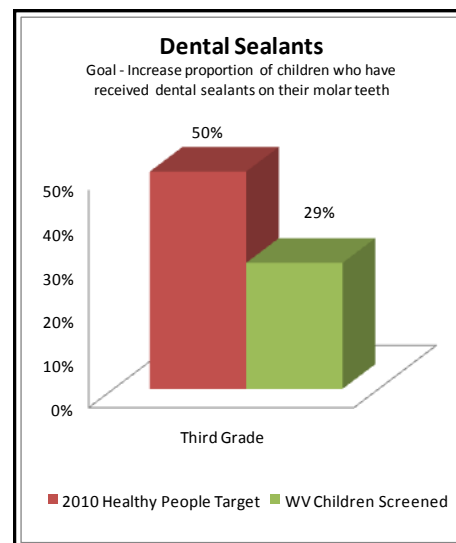
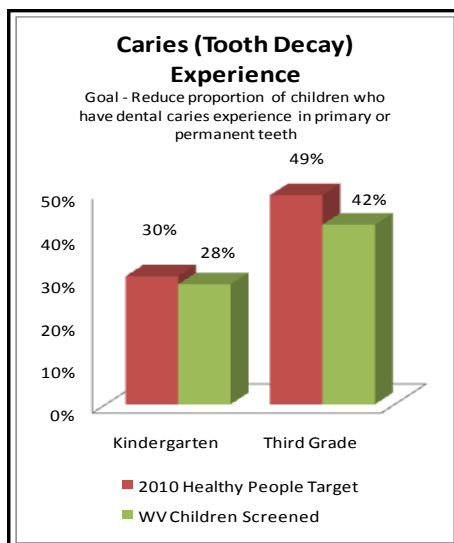
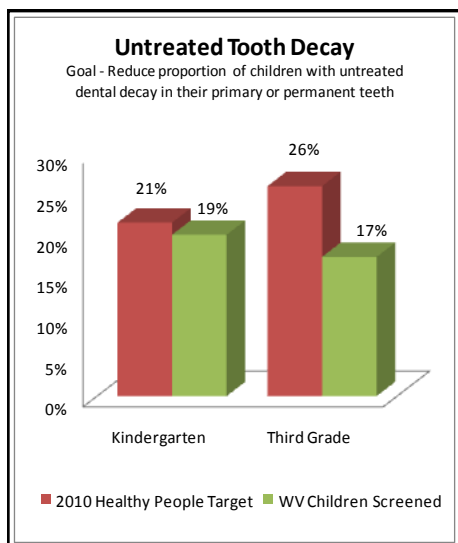
**1,093  
Children  
Screened**

Kindergarten: 644 (58%)  
Third Grade: 449 (41%)  
Caucasian: 973 (89%)  
African American: 59 (5%)  
Male: 561 (51%)  
Female: 532 (48%)

	Kindergarten	Third Graders	Total Screened
Untreated Decay	128 (20%)	77 (17%)	205 (19%)
Sealants on Permanent Molars		130 (29%)	145 (13%)
Caries Experience (Previous cavities)	149 (28%)	139 (42%)	338 (31%)
<b>Treatment Urgency:</b>			
• No Obvious Problems	518 (80%)	371 (83%)	889 (81%)
• Early Dental Treatment Needed	111 (17%)	65 (15%)	176 (16%)
• Urgent Immediate Care Needed	15 (2%)	13 (3%)	28 (3%)

The first two graphs below show that the percentage of screened WV children with untreated tooth decay and caries experience (green bars) is favorable (lower), compared with national Healthy People goals (red bars).

This graph shows the percentage of screened WV Third-graders with dental sealants (green bar) is unfavorable (lower), compared with the national Healthy People goal (red bar).



**MARSHALL UNIVERSITY**  
Center for Rural Health

**SCHOOL HEALTH  
TECHNICAL  
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**Key Partners in 2010-11 Oral Health Surveillance Project:** WV Department of Health & Human Resources, Office of Maternal, Child & Family Health-Oral Health Program; West Virginia University School of Dentistry; West Virginia Department of Education; Lincoln Primary Care; and the Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department

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**For more information:** For additional state and national data, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/index.htm> as data and information change frequently and is updated on a regular basis. For further information, contact **Bobbi Jo Muto, BS, RDH** at 304.542.9592—[Bjmmuto.steele@marshall.edu](mailto:Bjmmuto.steele@marshall.edu)