

**Dental Sealants**

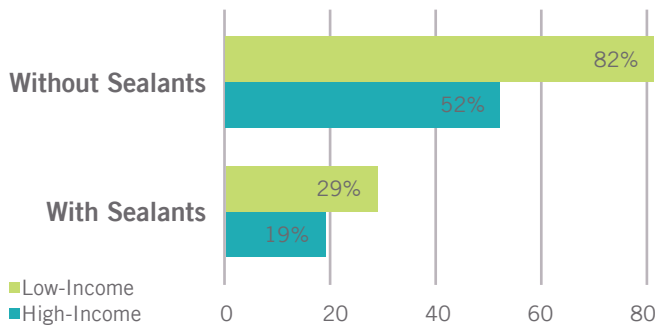


Dental sealants prevent **80%** of cavities in the back teeth, where **9 in 10** cavities occur.



Low-income children are **20% less likely** to get dental sealants than higher-income children.

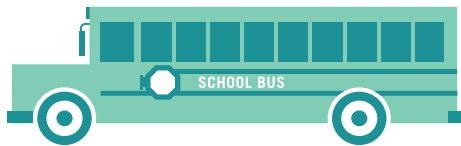
PERCENT OF CHILDREN WITH CAVITIES



Children from low-income families without sealants have about **60% more cavities** in their first adult molars than children from higher-income families.

Source: NHANES, 1999-2004 and 2011-2014.

**Louisiana Seals Smiles**



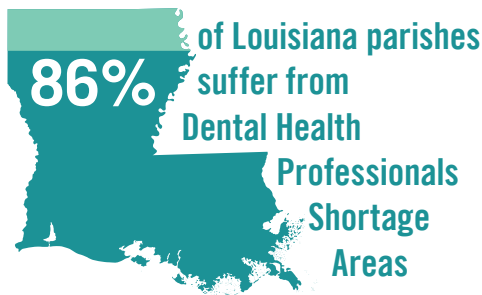
Schools are an ideal place to reach children—they play a pivotal role in impacting a child’s health. School-based dental sealant programs are an evidence-based best practice approach for preventing tooth decay among children, especially lower-income children.

Louisiana Seals Smiles is an oral health program operated by Well-Ahead Louisiana, an initiative of the Louisiana Department of Health. It provides dental sealants and fluoride varnish (as applicable) to eligible children ages 6 to 14, at no cost, while at school.

Between 2012 and 2015, a total of 7,824 children were screened and 4,283 received dental sealants in over fifteen parishes!



Children with poor oral health are **nearly 3X more likely** to miss school than their peers with better oral health



**43%** of Louisiana third graders had not seen a dentist in the last six months

Source: BSS Report, 2016-18.

## Host a School Dental Sealant Program in Your Community!

Be a leader for oral health in your community by being part of Louisiana Seals Smiles! Well-Ahead has the tools and tips to help you provide dental sealants to our most vulnerable children ages 6 to 14 in a Dental Health Professionals Shortage Areas (HPSA). A Louisiana Seals Smiles program can be done at a school, in a mobile unit or a clinic setting.

Well-Ahead Louisiana has a complete Louisiana Seals Smiles toolkit available online at [wellaheadla.com/LouisianaSealsSmiles](http://wellaheadla.com/LouisianaSealsSmiles). There you'll find all the resources you need to gain support, choose a school, implement the program, and evaluate it. For more information on available materials to help partners implement school sealant programs, please send inquires to [wellahead@la.gov](mailto:wellahead@la.gov).

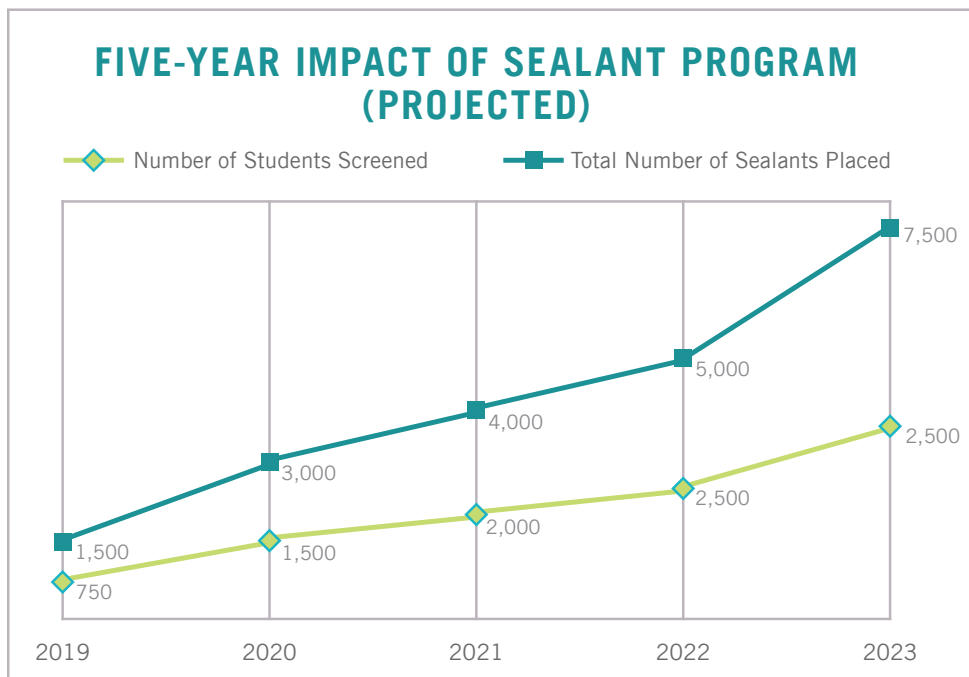
**READY TO HOST A SCHOOL DENTAL SEALANT PROGRAM? WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!**

Well-Ahead has several downloadable resources as well as a simple step-by-step guide available online to help you host a School Dental Sealant Program. Visit [wellaheadla.com/LouisianaSealsSmiles](http://wellaheadla.com/LouisianaSealsSmiles) for more information on getting started.

To operate effectively and ensure sustainability, all Louisiana Seals Smiles programs need adequate funding. Direct reimbursement through Medicaid or CHIP, or by sliding fee payments are options to fund ongoing services. Other possible funding sources may include:

- Federal funding agencies such as the Health Resources Services Administration or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Nonprofit agencies such as the United Way
- Dental insurance plans such as Delta Dental or MCNA Dental.

By working together and expanding Louisiana Seals Smiles across the state's Dental HPSAs, we can increase the number of students who receive dental sealants by 400% in five years!



Sources: HRSA Data Warehouse, June 19, 2019, Study of North Carolina schoolchildren published in the American Journal of Public Health, October 2011. Louisiana Bright Smiles for Bright Futures Report, 2016-2018.



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