

## Access to Dental Care

Children with poor oral health are nearly **three times** more likely than their healthy counterparts to miss school as a result of dental pain. Absences due to oral pain are associated with poorer school performance. \*

**NATIONAL ORAL HEALTH:** *Healthy People 2020* established a goal to reduce the proportion of children & adolescents with dental caries or untreated dental decay, particularly among at-risk, uninsured populations.

<i>Healthy People 2020 Targets for Rate of Dental Issues per Uninsured vs. Private Insured, 2013-16</i>									
Age Range	3-5 Years			6-9 Years			13-15 Years		
Dental Caries	2020 Target	Uninsured	Private	2020 Target	Uninsured	Private	2020 Target	Uninsured	Private
		30%	41.7%	19%	49%	--	--	48.3%	--
Untreated Dental Decay	2020 Target	Uninsured	Private	2020 Target	Uninsured	Private	2020 Target	Uninsured	Private
		21.4%	26.9%	7.4%	25.9%	32.5%	11.5%	15.3%	31.7%

Per the *National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey* (2013-16), per race/ethnicity disparity, Black or African American children ages 6-9 had the highest rates of untreated dental decay, followed by children of Mexican American heritage.

### ORAL HEALTH: Florida's Children

According to the Florida Department of Health (FDOH), dental caries (tooth decay) remains the most common preventable chronic infectious disease among young children and adolescents in the United States. Across Florida, during the 2016-2017 school year, per a statewide oral health surveillance of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders:

- \*Untreated decay highest for non-Hispanic Black children (34.6%) and for children without dental insurance (32.8%)
- \*More than half children from schools with highest % of students enrolled in free/reduced lunch had caries experience (52.2%)
- \*Dental sealant prevalence highest for children from schools with less than 25% students enrolled in free/reduced lunch (52.5%)
- \*In 2014-2015, 5.4% of Early Head Start children ages 0-3 and 20.8% of Head Start children 3-5 years had untreated decay

Overall, children covered with private dental insurance had the lowest rate of each oral indicator of need and the highest rate of dental sealants, compared to children who had Medicaid or no dental insurance.

**Interventions.** Per the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* (CDC), dental sealants can prevent up to 80% of tooth decay and prevent costs of future dental services from untreated tooth decay. The CDC (*State Actions to Improve Oral Health Outcomes*,) strongly recommends evidence-based preventive interventions that include expanded sealant delivery within elementary and middle schools in which at least 50% of students qualify for the federal/state free-reduced meal program.

### LOCAL ORAL HEALTH SERVICES for CHILDREN: Martin County

According to State of Florida statistics, during CY 2015, 141 youth ages 0-20 visited Emergency Departments for dental-related complaints, at a cost of \$197,501 (payer sources unavailable for this age category).

FDOH School-Based Preventative Dental Program, Martin County, Numbers Served			
PROGRAM INTERVENTION	2018-19	2019-20	
K, 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Graders who received dental screenings, fluoride, sealants, education	2,242	1,665	
ELC children who received dental screenings, fluoride, sealants, education	684	631	
<b>Total Children Served</b>	<b>2,926</b>	<b>2,296*</b>	* Impacted by COVID
Parents who received education, follow-up, care coordination	400	424	
ELCs participating in Toothbrush Program	4	7	2019-20 80% had an improved Oral Health Index; 8.8% remained fair.

### Light of the World

During 2019-20: The *Little Lights Dentistry Program* served 783 children during the 2019-20 contract year, 76 for acute dental emergencies. 'Little Lights' continues to work with children that have no insurance or Medicaid, whose family incomes fall below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, and that have not graduated from high school (may go up to age 21).

**Sources:** FLHealthCHARTS [www.floridacharts.com](http://www.floridacharts.com) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) \*FL DOH Florida's Burden of Oral Disease Surveillance Report 2016, 1.1; Oral Health Status of Florida's Third Grade Children 2016-17 [http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/dental-health/reports/\\_documents/oral-health-third-grade-2016-2017.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/dental-health/reports/_documents/oral-health-third-grade-2016-2017.pdf) Dental-Related ED Visits Florida CY 2015 by Patient County of Residence, Age, and Primary Payer [www.oralhealthflorida.org](http://www.oralhealthflorida.org) *Last updated 10.27.20*