

State of Vermont
Department of Health
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Burlington, December 15, 2016

Dear School Principal,

Thank you for your participation in the Tooth Tutor School-Linked Sealant Program and for helping to improve the oral health of Vermont's children and families! By participating in the Tooth Tutor Program, you are making a great difference: you are promoting optimal oral health and overall health for children in your school community.

Dental disease is a serious childhood problem. According to a 2012 study published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, children with toothaches were four times more likely to display poor academic performance. Moreover, disadvantaged children with no access to needed dental care missed school over twice as much compared with those with access.* Dental disease affects more than just teeth and oral health; its impact on children is far-reaching, with implications on the general health, speech development, nutrition, self-esteem, and learning. Luckily, dental decay is almost 100% preventable.

The Tooth Tutor is a dental hygienist who teaches classroom dental health education and identifies children who have not seen a dentist in the previous year (the true target group). The main goal of the program is to link every child to a dental home, where they receive comprehensive dental care, including dental sealants—an integral component of prevention that has been proven effective against dental decay. Tooth Tutors work closely with the school nurse, health liaison, classroom teachers, community dentists, and families to achieve this goal.

On the back of this letter, you will find a summary of the 2015-16 school year Tooth Tutor report. If you have any questions, please contact the program coordinator, Debora Teixeira (debora.teixeira@vermont.gov).

Thank you again for your continued participation in the Tooth Tutor Program!

Sincerely,



Robin M. Miller, RDH, MPH
Vermont Department of Health's Oral Health
Director



Debora Teixeira, DDS (not licensed in VT)
Tooth Tutor Program Coordinator
Oral Health Program Administrator

*Seirawan, H., Faust, S., & Mulligan, R. (2012). The Impact of Oral Health on the Academic Performance of Disadvantaged Children. *American Journal of Public Health*, 102(9), 1729-1734.



TOOTH TUTOR PROGRAM 2015-16 School Year Summary

The main goal of the Tooth Tutor Program is to link every child to a dental home, where they receive comprehensive dental care, including dental sealants—an integral component of prevention that has been proven effective against dental decay. The True Target Group is comprised of children who have not been to the dentist in the previous year.

I. Percentage of students in the True Target Group who have accessed dental care due to the TTP

Head Start	86% (154/195)
Pre-K	68% (115/183)
Elementary/Middle Schools	62% (1362/2321)
High School	44% (120/308)
Average	62%

II. Percentage of students in the True Target Group who have received at least one sealant

Elementary/Middle Schools*	20% (440/2321)
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*Sealant data is collected only in these schools

