

# School-Based Dental Program **Q & A**

## **Why is Oral Health Important?**

Oral health has been shown to impact overall health and well-being. Approximately 30% of third-grade children in the Tri-County region have evidence of untreated tooth decay (dental caries). Tooth decay, or dental caries, is the most common chronic disease among children, with dental care being the greatest unmet service need. If untreated, tooth decay is often painful and can disrupt learning, school performance, and daily activities.

## **What is a School-Based Dental Program?**

A school-based dental program provides dental services to students where they are – in school. The Program operates within a school building or on school grounds while the school is in session and serves the students enrolled in the school. The Program uses portable equipment that is easily set up and broken down. The length of time spent at a site depends on the needs of the school.

## **What Services are Offered?**

Preventive services that our Program offers are screenings, cleanings, fluoride treatments, and sealants. Additionally, dental education is provided to individual students and can be provided in classroom sessions as well. Services will be provided by a N.Y. State licensed dental hygienist who is on the staff of North Country Family Health Center. Restorative/treatment services may be offered based on the needs of the student population. If they were offered, our dentist would come onsite to perform exams, x-rays, fillings, simple extractions, and referrals to dental specialists.

## **What Does it Cost?**

There are no out of pocket expenses for preventative services. If there is insurance associated with the student we will bill insurance to cover our expenses. If restorative/treatment services are offered at the school, these will be the parent/guardians' responsibility and will be billed to insurance, if applicable. North Country Family Health Center participates with a number

of insurances and offers a sliding fee scale based on federal poverty guidelines. The full cost of restorative services can be shared with parents/guardians prior to the visit, if requested.

## **Who is Eligible for the Program?**

Any student may receive preventive dental care. If you have a family dentist, your child can still get preventive care (dental screenings, cleanings, sealants, and fluoride treatments) at school. There are no eligibility or income requirements. We treat Pre-K through 12th grade. All you have to do is enroll your child in the Program. Enrollment forms will be distributed to every student; the form can also be made available on the school's website.

## **How are Appointments Scheduled?**

Once the enrollment form has been returned to school, parents will be contacted before your child is scheduled for a visit. The students will have a pass presented to them at the beginning of their day letting them know the time of their dental appointment. We always try to avoid a core subject or special activity when scheduling your child's appointment.

## **Can I Come to My Child's Appointment?**

Parents are always welcome to come, but is not necessary.

Appointments typically last 20 minutes. After each visit, the student will receive a goody bag filled with oral hygiene supplies and a note discussing the outcome of the appointment. If there are any concerns a phone call home will be made.

