



RESOLUTION #2
Wisconsin Seal-a-Smile School-based/School-linked Sealant Programs

Dental sealants are a thin plastic coating applied to the chewing surfaces of molars(back teeth) to prevent dental caries by creating a physical barrier against bacterial plaque and food.

WHEREAS, dental caries (tooth decay) is one of the most prevalent health problems in Wisconsin with 60 percent of third grade children having experienced dental decay; and

WHEREAS, dental caries is the single most common chronic disease of childhood, occurring five times as frequently as asthma; and

WHEREAS, dental caries is understood as a transmissible and infectious bacterial biofilm disease; and

WHEREAS, dental caries affects 18 percent of nation’s children aged 2-4 years, 52 percent of children aged 6-8 years and 61 percent of teenagers age 15; and

WHEREAS, approximately 90 percent of dental caries in children’s permanent teeth occurs on tooth surfaces with pits and fissures; and

WHEREAS, certain groups, e.g., those of lower socioeconomic status and underserved groups, are disproportionately affected by dental diseases while having less access to clinical prevention and treatment services; and

WHEREAS, sealants are 100 percent effective in preventing dental caries in the pits and fissures when they are fully retained on the tooth; and

WHEREAS, in addition to preventing dental caries, sealants can arrest caries progression; and

WHEREAS, according to Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General 2000, sealants have been shown to reduce dental caries by more than 70 percent; and

WHEREAS, by placing sealants on occlusal (biting) surfaces of first permanent molars in 6-8 year olds, mutans streptococci levels were significantly reduced up to six months later; and

WHEREAS, the combination of sealants and fluoride has the potential to eliminate dental caries in school-age children; and

WHEREAS, sealants are most cost-effective when provided to children who are at the highest risk for dental caries; and

WHEREAS, school-based dental sealant programs could increase the prevalence of dental sealants, and reduce or eliminate racial and income disparities among children with sealants; and

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Seal-a-Smile program is proven to be cost effective, serves children at high risk and averts dental caries for each child sealed; therefore,



BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE WISCONSIN ORAL HEALTH COALITION:

1. Supports the continuation of current programs and the future expansion of school-based/school-linked sealant programs; and
2. Encourages its members and constituents to be well informed and to continue to support dental sealant programs, and to help develop regional and local coalitions in support of dental sealant programs; and
3. Commends communities and states that are providing school-based/school-linked dental sealant programs and encourages them to continue to expand services and to monitor the process, and participate in state monitoring activities; and
4. Calls upon oral health and public health organizations and institutions to provide leadership in educating public officials, policy makers, and the general public about the need to implement and/or maintain school-based/school-linked sealant programs; and
5. Calls upon the Wisconsin legislature to allocate adequate resources to continue and expand school-based/school-linked dental sealant programs.

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