SCHOOL NURSES
THE KEY TO GOOD ORAL HEALTH DURING COVID-19

Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease during childhood.
If left untreated, tooth decay can cause pain and serious infections.
Children with toothaches are 4 times more likely to have lower grades.

42% The percentage of kindergarten children that have had tooth decay.

23% The percentage of low-income children with <u>untreated</u> tooth decay.

Because of COVID-19, many children are not getting the dental care they need.

By doing verbal assessments or dental screenings, school nurses play a critical role in identifying children in need of dental care.

VERBAL ASSESSMENT:

- Ask child if they have a toothache, teeth that hurt when eating, or teeth that wake them at night
- Look for signs of oral problems such as flinching/grimacing while eating or holding their face

DENTAL SCREENING:

- Simple, quick, non-invasive assessment of a child's oral health
- Use a penlight to look for obvious signs of tooth decay
- Ideal in-school tool for triaging children
- Classifies children as
  - Having no obvious problems
  - Needing non-urgent dental care
  - Needing immediate/urgent dental care

RESOURCES FOR SCHOOL NURSES

Oral Health Screening Pocket Guide for School Nurses
www.mchoralhealth.org/materials/multiples/SchoolScreening/PocketGuide.pdf

Considerations for School Nurses in Return to Schools: Dental Screening
https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/3870c72d-fff9-4ed7-833f-215de278d256/UploadedImages/PDFs/Dental_Screening_Considerations_for_School_Nurses_in_Return_to_School.pdf

PPE FOR DENTAL SCREENINGS

- Gloves
- Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
- Surgical mask

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Where oral health lives

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