



# PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

[www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health/](http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/health/)

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## SUMMARY

During the 2004-2005 school year, the Kittitas County Public Health Department – Oral Health Program conducted an oral health survey on a total of 331 children: preschoolers, Elementary School 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, and 7<sup>th</sup> graders. in Kittitas County, HeadStart and ECEAP programs were selected for the preschool survey, to be consistent with the State criteria and all children were invited to participate. Out of 105 possible, 50 children were screened. For the Elementary survey, all public Elementary schools were contacted and 4 of the 8 schools participated; out of 371 possible, 163 students were screened. For the Teen Screen, all children enrolled in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade at Morgan Middle School were invited to participate; out of 232 possible, 118 were screened.

Trained Dental professionals screened the children using gloves, masks, a disposable mirror, and a light source. Data were reported on a standardized form provided by Washington State Department of Health-Maternal and Child Health Program. The data was entered into the CDC/EPI Info data base and analyzed at the Kittitas County Public Health Department.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Dental decay is a significant public health problem for low-income preschool children in Kittitas County (N=50 screened)
  - 64% of these 3-5 year olds already had cavities and/or fillings (decay experience)
  - 50.0% of these children had untreated dental decay
  - 6.0% had a history of rampant decay, ( more than 7 teeth had cavities)
  - 6.0% were referred for urgent dental treatment
- Dental decay is a significant public health problem for elementary school children in Kittitas County. (N=163 screened)
  - 61.7% of these 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade children already had cavities and/or fillings
  - 25.3% had untreated dental decay
  - 14.8% had a history of rampant decay (more than 7 teeth had cavities)
  - 3.1% were referred for urgent dental treatment
- Dental decay is a significant public health problem for teens at Morgan Middle School in Ellensburg, Kittitas County (N=118 screened)
  - 26.4% of the 7<sup>th</sup> graders at Morgan MS already had cavities and/or fillings
  - 22.9% had untreated dental decay
  - Less than 1% of these children had a history of rampant dental decay
  - 2.0% of these children were referred for urgent dental treatment
- While dental sealants are a proven method for preventing decay, a substantial portion of Kittitas County youth have not received this preventive service.
  - 56% of these teens did not have sealants ( 66 out of 118)

## CONCLUSION

Kittitas County has not met the National Healthy People 2010 objective for untreated decay in elementary school children. The target for the Healthy People 2010 objective for untreated decay is 21%. The results of the Washington State Smile Survey showed an average of 12.3% of the children screened had untreated decay. The results of the Kittitas County survey showed an average 25.3% of the children who were screened had untreated tooth decay.

While Washington State has met the Healthy People 2010 objective for untreated decay, Kittitas County has a ways to go to meet the objective.

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*To Protect and Promote the Health and the Environment of the People of Kittitas County*