



Dental Screenings in Schools

DID YOU KNOW?

In elementary schools in Ottawa, close to 10% of children screened present with urgent dental needs (such as, cavities, signs of infection, pain).

WHAT IS A DENTAL SCREENING?

The dental screening is a no-touch technique. The registered dental hygienist uses a disposable tongue depressor and a flashlight to look at children's mouth. This short visual assessment helps identify the need for dental care.

The 34 public health units across Ontario, including Ottawa Public Health are mandated under the School Health Requirement #5 of the Ontario Public Health Standards to conduct dental screenings in schools.



WHY ARE SCHOOL DENTAL SCREENINGS IMPORTANT?

- To identify oral health problems early
- To identify children with oral pain
- To identify oral problems that require urgent dental treatment
- To notify parents/guardians/caretakers of dental needs
- To support low-income families in applying for the Healthy Smiles Ontario program, if eligible
- To support families with dental referral

HOW CAN CAVITIES AFFECT YOUR CHILDREN?

- Difficulty sleeping
- Poor concentration
- Learning difficulties
- Limited choice of food because of the inability to chew properly
- Troubled speech
- Premature loss of teeth
- Lower self esteem
- Widespread infection for the severe cases.

