



## THE FACTS ABOUT I-Smile™ @ School

### What is I-Smile™ @ School?

I-Smile™ @ School is a preventive dental program that provides no-cost dental screenings, dental sealants, fluoride varnish, and oral health education for students. These services are provided by Iowa licensed dentists and dental hygienists. This preventive dental program takes place during the school day, but students miss very little class time.

### Why is oral health care so important?

Tooth decay (also called cavities) is the most common chronic childhood disease. It is five times more common than asthma and seven times more common than hay fever. Students miss an estimated 51 million hours of school time each year due to dental-related illness.<sup>1</sup> Decay damages teeth and can impact a student's ability to learn, eat and speak properly, sleep, and build self-confidence. Dental sealants and fluoride varnish help protect the teeth and prevent decay. They save time, money and the discomfort often associated with tooth decay.

### What is a dental screening?

A dental screening is a simple look in the mouth to check the condition of the teeth and determine if dental sealants or fluoride varnish are needed. No x-rays are taken, and a dental screening does not take the place of a dental checkup at a dental office.

### What is fluoride varnish?

Fluoride varnish is a sticky liquid that is quickly and easily applied to teeth to strengthen them and prevent tooth decay. It is safe and tastes good. Fluoride varnish is highly effective at reducing a child's risk of decay.



### What are dental sealants?

A dental sealant is a tooth-colored material that is applied to the chewing surfaces of back teeth. Sealants protect teeth from germs and food that can cause cavities. They are very effective at preventing cavities and are recommended by the American Dental Association.

### How are dental sealants applied?

Applying sealants is simple and painless. The teeth are cleaned and the sealant liquid is painted in the grooves of the chewing surfaces with a small brush. The sealant bonds directly to the tooth in about 30 seconds with the use of a special light.

### How long do dental sealants last?

Sealants can last for many years if your child takes good care of his or her teeth. Sealants should be checked at each dental visit and reapplied if necessary.

### When should a child's teeth be sealed?

A child's permanent molars should be sealed as soon as they erupt. These teeth usually come in around the ages of 6 and 12 years. Permanent premolars and primary (baby) molars may also be sealed to protect those teeth from tooth decay.

### How much do these services cost?

All I-Smile™ @ School program services are provided at no cost.

<sup>1</sup> US Department of Health and Human Services. Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General—Executive Summary. Rockville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, National Institutes of Health, 2000.



### Contact information

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