

NYS Oral Health, Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey: Facts

- An estimated 51 million school hours per year are lost because of dental-related illness.
- Tooth decay is preventable and simple habits such as regular tooth brushing can make a significant difference.
- Obesity is becoming a major public health problem and data are needed to assess its magnitude.
- According to the New York State Health Department's Prevention Agenda, no more than 42% of 3rd grade children should have tooth decay. In the 2002-2004 survey, 54% of 3rd grade children had tooth decay.
- Data gathered from this survey will be used to assess the needs, develop plans and monitor progress by local health departments.
- The survey on 3rd grade children has two components, a parental survey and a dental screening by a dental professional.
- The survey collects information on demographics, dental visit, insurance coverage, access to regular source of dental care and physical activity and nutrition related questions.
- The survey will be completed by parents and a written parental consent will be sent back to the school, if the parent wishes the child to participate.
- Dental screening component has a trained dental professional recording information on tooth decay and whether dental sealants, an indicator of preventive behavior are present or not.
- It takes 5 minutes of class room time to complete the dental screening. No special equipment is needed.
- A Dental Screening Report for each child will be provided.
- Each participating child will receive a tooth brush to promote dental health.