



# Clark County Public Health

## SMILE SURVEY 2010

### Key Findings

- **Tooth decay is a health disparity issue in Clark County. Children eligible for free or reduced lunch are twice as likely to have untreated decay (14%) compared to their peers (7%).**
- **From 2005 to 2010, there was an increase in the percent of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders that have never had a cavity (38% and 45% respectively).**
- **The percent of Head Start students with untreated decay decreased from 2005 (20%) to 2010 (12%).**
- **White, non-Hispanic students are twice as likely to have dental sealants present (36%) than non-white (17%). Dental sealants are an evidence-based method to prevent tooth decay.**

### Oral Health: An Important Part of Total Health

Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease of childhood. Poor oral health and loss of teeth impacts speech, nutrition, self-esteem, social interaction, and a child's ability to learn. Everyday teachers see the impact of poor oral health in their students. Jason is a true example of how oral health can affect child behavior.

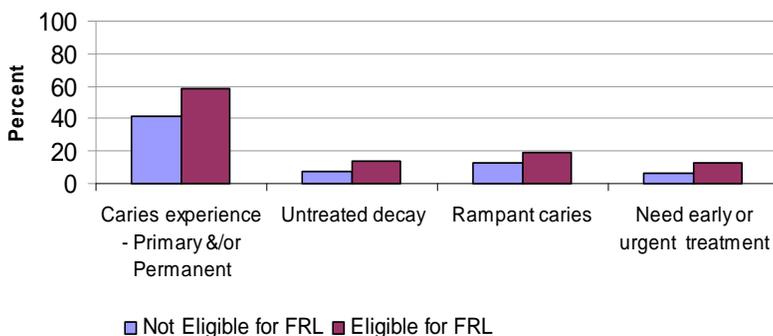
Four year old Jason had many issues when he arrived at Head Start. He exhibited failure to thrive and never ate well at meal times. Other problems identified included speech and language problems, as well as behavioral issues such as being withdrawn, keeping his eyes and head downward, lack of desire to play with others and abruptly striking out at other children

Standard hearing, vision, speech, language, developmental and social emotional screenings were administered but it wasn't until somebody looked in his mouth that the problem was found. Jason had significant tooth decay and multiple abscesses. When asked if his mouth hurt, his answer was always "no". He considered pain to be normal.

After completing treatment, Jason transformed. He gained 4 pounds, plays well with others, reduced his self-esteem issues, speaks well and demonstrates good cognitive skills. The therapy services through the school district are no longer needed. Most of all, he is positive, interacts with his classmates and there are smiles on his face every day.



2010 Smile Survey - Children Eligible and Not Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL)



### Tooth Decay Can Be Prevented

Although tooth decay is the most common chronic disease of childhood, it can be prevented. Community water fluoridation, topical fluoride treatments and dental sealants are among the best ways to prevent tooth decay. Unfortunately, only 34% of Clark County's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade children have dental sealants, only 48% of Clark County's residents have access to a fluoridated water system, and only 40% of eligible children are enrolled in the ABCD Program. In order to improve the oral health of our children, continued efforts must be made to assure that all children have access to these valuable preventive services.