

# CDC Expert Panel on School-based Sealant Programs

National Oral Health Conference

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To Seal or  
not to  
Seal?

# School-based or school-linked dental sealant programs.

- Number of states with programs
- Other states thinking about programs
- Some states are struggling to initiate, expand, or even continue operating public health sealants programs.
  - Despite past research regarding effectiveness
  - Despite community and advocacy support

# Challenges faced by states in promoting these programs

- Questions?
  - Concerning effectiveness
  - Concerning tooth selection
  - Concerning placement
  - Concerning CRA newsletter
- Decision by CDC to review sealant guidelines
  - ASTDD requested
  - Last reviewed in 1994
  - New information
  - Caries prevalence still high

# Answers to Questions

- Indications
  - On sound, at risk surfaces
  - To arrest questionable non-cavitated carious lesions
    - Results show that caries may become inactive or arrested if adequately sealed.
    - Remember “iceberg of dental caries”
    - Use good judgment and be consistent

# Answers to Questions

## ■ Detection

- Visual (Sharp eyes and a blunt explorer)
- No magnification required
- No radiographs necessary
- No need for other diagnostic tools (i.e. diagnodent) to avoid high number of “false positives”

# More Answers to Questions

- Tooth Preparation
  - Follow manufacture's recommendations?
  - More guidelines to come at a later date?

# Summary of Expert Panel Findings

- To seal or not to seal?
- Reconfirmed School Sealant Programs to be effective in reducing caries



# Request to Expert Panel

- Great findings but.....Please
- Publish findings of report as soon as possible. Information will be extremely valuable in helping to promote school-based sealant programs both existing and new.

# To Expert Panel...

- Thanks for all the hard work!!!