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## Health Department Expands Onsite Dental Sealant Program to Third Elementary School



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BUNNELL - Building upon its positive partnership with Flagler Schools, the Florida Department of Health in Flagler County (DOH-Flagler) has expanded its free dental sealant program to a third elementary school, Wadsworth Elementary. In 2016, the DOH launched its program in Bunnell Elementary, expanding to a second Title One school, Rymfire Elementary, in 2017.

According to Dental Director Lisa Izzo, expanding the program to a third elementary school was a logical progression to serve more Flagler families, while also improving the oral health of students.

“We’ve received such positive feedback from families with kids at Bunnell and Rymfire,” said Izzo. “We are looking forward to saving Wadsworth families time and money through this free in-school program.”

Dr. Anna Crawford, principal of Wadsworth Elementary said, “We are excited for the opportunity to partner with our local office of the Florida Department of Health. Not only will providing this service help our families and improve the oral health of our Wadsworth students, but it is a great opportunity to teach them about the importance of dental health. Additionally, with attendance being a focus at our school, we are in hopes that this will lessen the time that students have to miss school for proper dental care.”

Dental sealants are the most effective way of preventing cavities in permanent molars, where more than 80% of decay occurs in children. The deep grooves and fissures of the molars allow decay to occur deep within the tooth structure where fluoride is less effective. Thin plastic coatings that are applied to the tooth surface stop this decay from happening. As part of the DOH-Flagler’s program, dental hygienists visit schools and apply free sealants to students’ molars during the school day.

Currently, 54 Florida Department of Health County Health Departments provide school-based sealant program services. The DOH-Flagler is entering its third year providing these services, having improved the dental health of 720 students to date. Additional information regarding school-based sealant programs is attached and can also be found by contacting the Public Health Dental Program at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/dental-health/index.html>.

If you have questions about the dental sealant program, please call the Health Department at 386-437-7350, ext. 7087.

**About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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For information about the local health department, go to [flagler.floridahealth.gov](http://flagler.floridahealth.gov), call 386-437-7350, or visit the office at 301 Dr. Carter Blvd. in Bunnell.