

School Health Dental Screening Reference Chart

Equipment & PPE needed for Dental Screenings:

- Light source (such as LED flashlight)
- Trash can with liner
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Computer or paper to record results
- Screening follow-up form
- Toothbrushes
- Single-use disposable tongue blades (optional)
- Single-use disposable dental mirror (optional)
- Gloves
- Eye protection (safety glasses or face shield)
- Surgical mask



Preparation:

- Coordinate scheduling of dental screening with building administrators and teachers. Dental screenings may be done outside.
- Notify families of dental screening day.
- If available, for infection control purposes, team each screener with a person to record results of inspection for each student.
- Try to avoid screening right after a meal or snack, or have child brush teeth before screening.

Procedure:

1. Have the child open mouth as wide as possible for inspection of all surfaces of teeth. Child lifts and moves tongue so screener can see inner, outer, and top surfaces of all teeth, or screener may use tongue blade to gently maneuver tongue.
2. Utilizing light source, observe teeth and gums for:
 - a. Areas where teeth appear to have holes or obvious defects.
 - b. Unusually colored or stained teeth or broken teeth.
 - c. Gums for swelling or abscess.
3. Record results. Indicate location of areas of concern by quadrant (upper right, lower right, upper left, lower left) - oriented to the student's right and left sides. Assign student to one of the following categories:
 - a. 0 = no obvious problems of the teeth. regular dental care is encouraged.
 - b. 1 = observable problems with the teeth in one or two areas (quadrants). Parents are notified of need for further dental care.
 - c. 2 = observable problems with the teeth in three or more areas (quadrants) or urgent needs such as pain, swelling, abscesses or drainage. Parents notified of urgent need for further dental care.
4. Carry out notification procedures per local school practice/policy. Parents should be notified of the need for further evaluation for "1" and "2" results. urgent notifications should be made to parent if/when there are severe changes to any teeth, any complaints of mouth or tooth pain, and/or any areas of apparent swelling or drainage, indicating possible active infection or injury.

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Category 0: If the child's teeth look normal like these photos, there are no obvious problems and routine dental care is recommended.



Front



Top



Bottom

Category 1: If the child's teeth look like these photos, or if the child has observable problems with the teeth in one or two areas (quadrants), there may be a need for early dental care and the parent/guardian is notified.



Front



Top



Bottom

Category 2: If the child's teeth look like these photos, or if the child has observable problems with the teeth in three or more areas (quadrants), there is an urgent need for dental care and parent/guardian is notified the day of the screening.



Front



Top



Bottom

Photos courtesy of the Nebraska DHHS Office of Oral Health and Dentistry

References:

[ASTDD Infographic](#)

[DHHS School Health Screening Regulations: Title 173, Chapter 7: School Health Screening, Physical Examination, and Visual Evaluation](#)

[DHHS School Health Program](#)

Andrea Riley
School Health Liaison
State School Nurse Consultant
ariley@childrensnebraska.org