

Protect Your Child's Smile with Dental Sealants

What Are Dental Sealants?

- **Protection for Teeth:** A thin, protective coating placed onto the chewing surfaces of back teeth (molars).
- **Blocks 80%+ Cavities:** Acts as a shield to block-out food, germs, and bacteria that cause tooth decay.
- **Quick & Painless:** Applied in minutes during a regular dental checkup. No drilling, no numbing, no pain!



New Findings from Maryland's Survey of School Children

6 in 10 third graders need dental sealants but don't have them.

- Needs differ by region, race, ethnicity, and income
- Needs are equal between boys and girls.
- Children in lower-income schools are almost 2x more likely to lack sealants.

Percentage of 3rd Graders Lacking the Dental Sealants They Need (By Group and Region)

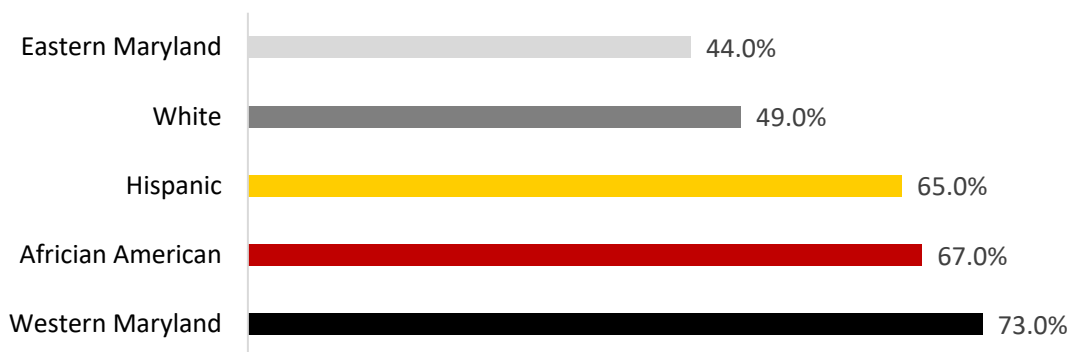


Figure 1: Percentage of Maryland Third Graders Lacking Sealants by Region and Demographic

When Should My Child Get Sealants?

- **AGES 6 – 7 Years (First Permanent Molars)**
 - Get sealants applied as soon as the first back teeth erupt to seal deep grooves early.
- **AGES 11 – 12 Years (Second Permanent Molars)**
 - Get sealants applied when the second set of permanent back molars grow in.

Three Easy Steps for Parents

- **STEP 1: Ask Your Dentist.**
 - At your child's next routine visit, ask: *"Are my child's back molars ready for sealants?"*
- **STEP 2: Request Same-Day Care.**
 - Ask the dentist to place sealants during the same checkup to save an extra trip.
- **STEP 3: Check School Programs.**
 - Watch for permission slips for free school-based dental sealant programs.

Dental sealants are covered 100% by Maryland Medicaid and most private insurance.

Resources

- Maryland Healthy Smiles Dental Program: <https://health.maryland.gov/mmcp/pages/maryland-healthy-smiles-dental-program.aspx>
- Maryland Oral Health Resource Guide: <https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/oralhealth/pages/resourceguide.aspx>