

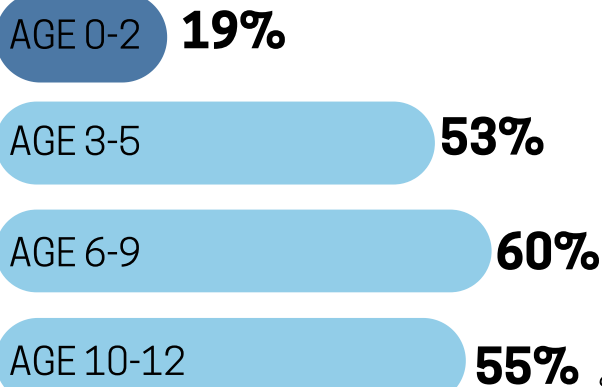
# INSIDE I-SMILE™

## 2021 Update on Children's Oral Health in Iowa

The I-Smile™ dental home initiative connects Iowa children and families with dental, medical, and community resources to ensure a lifetime of health and wellness. Good oral health allows children the ability to eat well, grow and thrive, concentrate on learning, feel positive about their appearance, and improve social interactions, thus contributing to overall well-being and reducing future dental and medical costs.

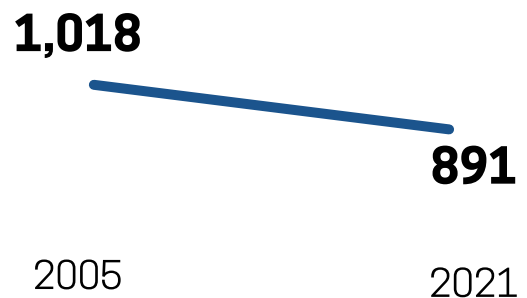


Percent of Medicaid-enrolled Children Receiving a Service from a Dentist in SFY21



SFY21 Iowa Medicaid Paid Claims

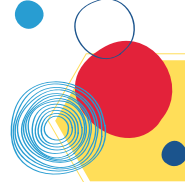
Number of Dentists Billing Medicaid for Services is Declining



## I-SMILE™ PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT



**Early Childhood Iowa (ECI)** is a statewide initiative with a vision that every child, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful. ECI does this by building capacity and commitment in Iowa communities to help young children and their families. Local ECI boards work with I-Smile™ to prevent dental disease, educate children and families, and link them to the resources they need to be healthy. In SFY 2021, **ECI partnered with local I-Smile™ programs, providing funding that allowed nearly 8,400 children ages 0-5 years to receive preventive dental services and assistance finding a dentist for regular and restorative care.**



# INSIDE I-SMILE™

2021 Update on Children's Oral Health in Iowa

## CHILDREN'S ORAL HEALTH IN IOWA

# 51,630

children received care coordination from I-Smile™ for dental care in SFY21; more than 12,550 received specific personalized help for their dental needs



# 16%

of children receiving an oral screening from I-Smile™ have active tooth decay



# 66%

of children receiving I-Smile™ services pay for dental care out-of-pocket or are on Medicaid



SFY21 I-Smile™ program data

I-Smile™ began in 2006. In partnership with the Iowa Department of Human Services™, the Iowa Department of Public Health administers I-Smile™ through contracts with public and private non-profit organizations as part of the statewide maternal and child health program. The 23 contractors each employ a dental hygienist who serves as the local I-Smile™ Coordinator, focused on preventing dental disease, identifying ways to help families address challenges so that underserved children may receive care from dentists, and promoting the importance of oral health within their communities through:

- Developing relationships with dental offices to improve access to appointments for children;
- Assisting families with scheduling dental appointments and linking to needed community resources;
- Increasing awareness about oral health through partnerships with businesses, organizations, and schools;
- Participating in community events and meetings, incorporating oral health within health and social initiatives;
- Addressing oral health issues through partnership with local boards of health;
- Training medical office staff to provide oral screenings and fluoride applications for children at well-child visits;
- Educating parents, children, and the public about oral health and preventing cavities; and
- Assuring that children have access to preventive care such as oral screenings and fluoride applications.

***I-Smile™ Success*** - Although the pandemic made it difficult to provide in-person education for kids in Head Start, preschools, and schools, local I-Smile™ programs got creative by making fun videos. One coordinator worked with two dentists to record a video for preschoolers - the kids got to laugh and learn about what to expect when they go to the dentist. Another I-Smile™ team made videos that they shared online, through social media, and with schools to be used as part of science and health curriculum.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, local I-Smile™ programs have had fewer opportunities to meet with local partners and reach children with preventive care due to restrictions on in-person gatherings. Dental offices are limiting the number of new patients they will see due to increased costs. I-Smile™ is more important than ever and will continue to respond to changes, identifying new ways to reach and help families and work with partners such as Early Childhood Iowa to ensure that Iowa children are healthy and successful.