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The Illinois Department of Public Health, Division of Oral Health, takes great pride in the community-based dental sealant programs throughout Illinois. The Division is confident that the schoolchildren who receive care through one of the community-based programs are provided quality preventive measures. These public health programs truly embrace the mission to improve the oral health of the people where they live, work and play.

The community programs focus on making sure every child possible receives dental sealants. The Division thinks of dental sealants as immunizations against cavities for teeth. The community-based programs give the children a positive dental experience and oral health education with take home messages so the children can continue to brush and floss and make good diet choices at home.

The community programs are best equipped to make sure that children, who need dental care, receive it. The community program has solid links to local dental offices and clinics as well as a proven track record of finding dental homes for children who do not already have one, especially those who are under-insured or un-insured.

The Division of Oral Health performs quality assurance on all community-based programs to ensure that all children are receiving the very best therapeutic preventive care. The Division makes sure that programs focus on sealants and when sealants are placed on a child's teeth, those sealants stick. Sealants that are not applied well and fall off are worse than no sealant at all. The community programs have a twenty-year history of sealant retention rates well over 90 percent. Illinois communities have a long term investment in the Dental Sealant Program and the health of the children in their care.

The Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois community-based dental sealant program is considered to be one of the best in the U.S. and was invited by the National Maternal and Child Health Resource Center to sit on their expert panel to create and revise the pre-eminent dental sealant program resource, *Seal America: the Prevention Invention*.

<http://www.mchoralhealth.org/Seal>