



Charles W. Grim, assistant surgeon general and director of the Indian Health Service, visits with Jody Green in the lab of the Siletz Clinic.

Toothtalk

by Teri (the tooth fairy) Coddington, RDH

SVS Sealant Project Returns

The Siletz Community Health Clinic again is holding its annual Siletz Valley School Sealant Project. Every spring, the clinic offers free sealants to Siletz Valley School children.

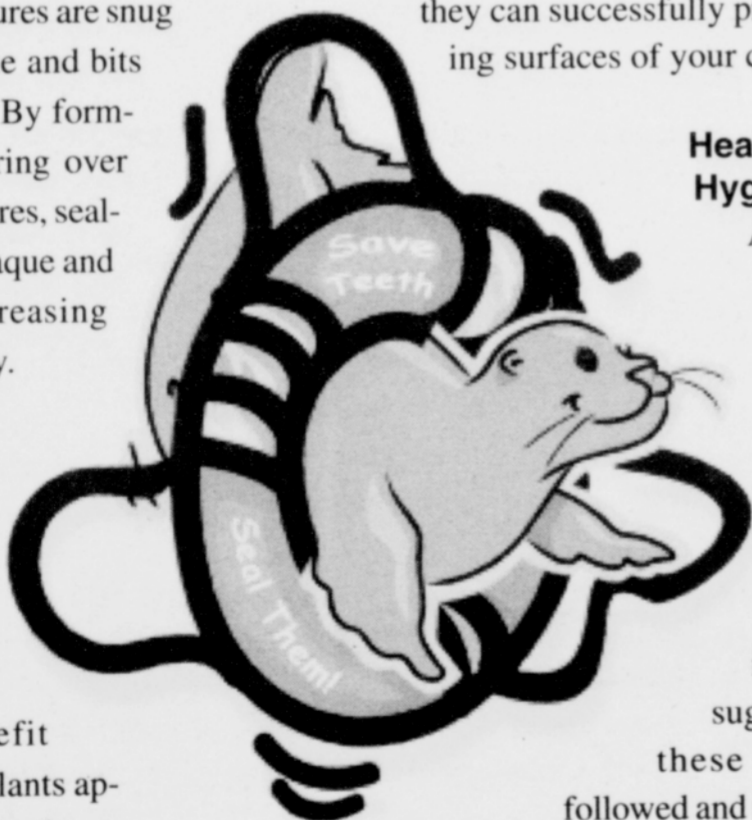
Why Are Sealants Necessary?

The purpose of sealants is to preserve teeth before they decay. When the back teeth are developing, depressions and grooves form in the chewing surfaces of the enamel. These irregularities are called pits and fissures. They are impossible to keep clean because toothbrush bristles cannot reach into them.

Pits and fissures are snug places for plaque and bits of food to hide. By forming a thin covering over the pits and fissures, sealants keep out plaque and food, thus decreasing the risk of decay.

Who Should Have Sealants Applied?

Children receive the greatest benefit from having sealants applied to their teeth, especially to newly erupted permanent teeth. Sealants are recommended for all children, even those who receive topical applications of fluoride or who live in communities with fluoridated water. Fluoride helps fight decay on the smooth surfaces of the teeth, but is least effective in pits and fissures.



How Are Sealants Applied?

Each tooth takes only a few minutes to seal. First, the teeth that will be sealed are cleaned. The chewing surfaces are then etched (roughened) with a weak acidic solution to help the sealant adhere to the teeth. Finally, the sealant is brushed on the tooth enamel and allowed to harden. Some sealants need a special curing light to help them harden.

ADA Supports Use of Sealants

The American Dental Association recognizes that sealants can play an important role in preventing tooth decay. When properly applied and maintained, they can successfully protect the chewing surfaces of your child's teeth.

Healthy Dental Hygiene Habits

A total prevention program includes regular visits to a dentist, the use of fluoride, daily brushing and flossing, and limiting sugar-rich foods. If these measures are followed and sealants are used on the child's teeth as well, the risk of decay can be reduced or may even be eliminated.

Parents who have children between first and fifth grade should look for a consent form from Siletz Valley School in April. This form and a medical history need to be completed and returned to the school by April 22.

Join Kids on Kick Butts Day

Kindergarten through fifth-graders at Siletz Valley School will celebrate **Kick Butts Day** on April 13. This nationally celebrated holiday helps youth around the nation call attention to the need for tobacco prevention for kids.

Since March 1, the kids have been working with DeAnna Pearl, Tobacco Prevention and Education Program coordinator, on a lot of activities around not smoking, tobacco abuse prevention, asthma and secondhand smoke awareness, refusal skills, and tobacco marketing awareness.

Children already know a lot about long-term smoking and its dangers. Next comes bringing this to another level and helping children understand the immediate consequences that commercial tobacco abuse brings to them.

"Kids this age are very prone to starting their lifelong relationship with commercial tobacco abuse. With education and intervention, we can prevent hundreds of youth and young adults from lighting up," said DeAnna.

Kindergarten through second-graders at SVS have pledged to give hugs and thanks to family members who smoke outside.

"My mom smokes outside because she said it was not good for me to breathe the smoke," says a second-grader.

The third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade classes are doing their part by participat-

ing in a poster contest. The top three place winners will receive a prize and their posters will be displayed in the school from April 11-15, along with information from the Siletz Community Health Clinic.

What You Can Do

According to a new study in the *Journal of Addiction* (March 2005), parents who quit smoking when their children are young are more likely to have kids who don't smoke or quit as young adults, according to researchers at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Parents who are smokers and who **quit before** their children are in third grade can greatly influence their children to not grow up to be smokers.

The study further shows that quitting after your child is in the third grade has little to no effect on the smoking or not smoking choices their children make in the future. Kids who smoke on a regular basis are beginning as young as age 8.

Kindergarten through fifth-graders of Siletz Valley School ask you to help spread the word and encourage tobacco prevention for youth by celebrating **Kick Butts Day** in your community on April 13.

If you have any questions or comments, please call DeAnna Pearl, TPEP coordinator, at 1-800-648-0449, ext. 1659, or 541-444-9659.



The Siletz Clinic held its annual papathon in February. The Mardi Gras theme was reflected in the waiting room decorations and in the goody bags that were handed out to the nearly 30 women who received their annual exams that day. The goody bags contained information on such topics as breast cancer awareness, manicure kits, and packets of flower seeds. Clinic staff also conducted drawings and gave away fleece blankets, T-shirts, gift packs, and one-hour massages. Although all women were welcomed to the papathon, the staff targeted mothers with tribal children and people who had not visited the clinic in awhile. Lisa Taylor, family nurse practitioner, and Erin Hume, physician assistant, provided the screenings that day.