



5 for Good: Forsyth Kids offers preventative dental care in schools

Thousands of children benefit from free dental care throughout commonwealth



By: [Erika Tarantal](#) | February 28, 2019

BOSTON — Reading, writing, arithmetic and good oral hygiene, those were the focuses of some of the activities during a recent visit to Match Community Day Public Charter School in Hyde Park.

Fourth-grader Jadalys Lopez was one of a long line of students sitting down for a fluoride treatment and a check-up.

"They told me I need to brush over here and over here but everything else was good," she said.

A room at the school had been transformed into what looked like a permanent dental office to see the students. The visiting team of dental professionals travels all over.

It's all part of [Forsyth Kids](#). Kerry Maguire is the director of the program.

"We travel out on to the Cape and as far west as Holyoke," Maguire said. "Forsyth Kids sees about 2,500 children in 60 sites around the commonwealth."

Forsyth started over 100 years ago as a dental hospital. It now takes preventative dental care on the road to address a significant problem. Officials say tooth decay is the most common childhood disease in the U.S.

"Dental health is an important part of overall health," Maguire said. "We try to catch children, if they have early problems, and work very intently with community health centers and community dentists to get them into care."

Forsyth Kids provides check-ups, fluoride treatments, full cleanings and sealants. School nurse Stephanie Rosario says their visits are welcome.

"It's great for them to start at a young age just having that good oral hygiene," Rosario said. "It's hard to tell if they are getting it at home. There are a lot of kids that come in and say their gums are hurting, their teeth hurt."

Experts from Forsyth Kids say that kind of pain can lead to poor concentration, trouble eating and even low self-esteem.

If a child is insured, Forsyth will bill their insurance for services but otherwise there is no co-pay or charge to the families and schools they serve.
