



Frequently Asked Questions for School Nurse Teachers About the Basic Screening Survey

What exactly is the BSS and how is this different from the annual oral health screening?

The BSS or Basic Screening Survey is a part of public health surveillance overseen by the Oral Health Program at the Rhode Island Department of Health that is required periodically by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The data gathered through the BSS can help inform immediate public health actions, program planning and evaluation, and research. The BSS itself is a brief, open-mouth screening done by the school dentist that is already working with your school, and will be conducted at the same time as the annual screenings already being performed. Additional information will be gathered through the BSS, but it should not take more time than the annual screening.

<http://www.health.ri.gov/forms/screening/OralHealthBSS.pdf>

Which schools were chosen for the BSS?

65 schools were selected to participate in the BSS. To see which schools were chosen, visit our [google doc](#).

When will this BSS take place? When should it be scheduled?

The BSS will take place during the regularly scheduled school dental screenings and only with kindergarten and 3rd grade students. The BSS will be ongoing throughout this school year (2019-2020), so feel free to schedule your school screenings with your dentist as you would usually.

How can a child opt out?

A BSS opt-out form should be sent home to parents.

(English: <http://www.health.ri.gov/forms/authorization/OralHealthBSS.pdf>)

Spanish: <http://www.health.ri.gov/otherlanguages/spanish/forms/authorization/OralHealthBSS.pdf>) If the form is not returned, the child will be screened. There are two different ways that this form can be sent out and returned:

1. If the annual screening consent form has already gone home, you can send this additional BSS opt-out form home to the kindergarten and third grade students who are going to be screened already.
2. If you have not sent home the original consent form, please send the opt-out form with the initial consent.

What additional work is required of School Nurse Teachers?

The aim of the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is to limit any additional work required of School Nurse Teachers. RIDOH is requesting your assistance with the following:

1. Send the opt-out form home to families.
2. Collect some additional child information, which can either be pre-populated by the School Nurse Teacher or completed the day of the BSS. Please work with your school dentist to determine the best way for your school. (All additional data collection will be done by the school dentist and/or their assistant).

It is important to note that the school screening information that you usually report to the Department of Health (<https://tinyurl.com/2019-20RISchoolDental>) will be still be required.

Will administering the BSS cost the school more money?

There should be no additional cost to the school.

Who will be conducting the BSS?

The school dentist you contract with for annual screenings will perform the BSS. They have already been made aware that this screening will be taking place.

Who will complete the information on the screening form?

As described above, your school and the dentist will determine who will complete the screening form at your school. RIDOH Oral Health Program staff can be available to help the day of the screening. Please contact Jordyn.Learman@health.ri.gov if you need assistance.

What if we have low numbers for the annual screening, do you still want us to participate?

The BSS is done by cluster sampling, so the measurement is not number of students, but the number of schools that participate. Having all selected schools participate will give us our needed representative sample.