

# Community Health Priority:

## Oral Health

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### Vision

Promote healthy teeth and the entire mouth such as gums, chewing muscles, palate, and tongue with the goal of being free of tooth decay, gum disease, oral cancer, and chronic oral pain.

### Goal Statements

- ✓ Establish an oral health collaborative initiative in Marathon County that will focus community partners' efforts
- ✓ Further the integration of oral health within the delivery of health care
- ✓ Expand current oral health prevention programs and services

### Background

There is a need to further integrate oral health into primary health care, as oral health impacts overall health of an individual. The payment system for oral health care needs to be unified and keeping with health care reimbursement. Disparities in dental care coverage continue to exist in minority and low income populations. Consumers could benefit in increasing their understanding of the importance of good oral health, oral health's contribution to chronic disease, and prevention measures individuals can take. The aesthetic impact of tooth decay and tooth loss will continue to impact the employability of a segment of the population.

### Data

- 77% of respondents to the 2015 LIFE Survey were satisfied with the accessibility of dental care
- 68% of 2015 LIFE Survey respondents were somewhat concerned or very concerned about the affordability of dental care
- From 2005-2011, 20% of Marathon County residents did not have a dental visit in the past year
- 79% of Marathon County high school students saw a dentist for a check-up, exam, teeth cleaning or other dental work during the last year
- 47% of 2015 LIFE Survey respondents between the ages of 18-34 reported not accessing dental care when they needed it in the last year
- 24.2% of LIFE respondents did not access dental care when needed

### Shared Measurement

By 2020, 10% of LIFE Report survey respondents will report that in the past 12 months they or someone in their household should have seen a dentist but did not, Baseline: 2015 - 11.1%, 2013 - 11.3%, Source: LIFE Report Surveys