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Occlusal traits and perception of orthodontic need in eighth grade students

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ABSTRACT

In 1994, 1155 eighth-grade students in Alachua County, Fla., were asked about self-perception of and level of concern for their occlusal status. Clinical assessments of orthodontic parameters were also recorded. Twenty-five percent of the students had a history of orthodontic treatment. Of the remaining students who had no history of orthodontic treatment, 74% reported satisfaction with the way their teeth looked, 64% expressed no perceived need for braces, and 57% were judged clinically to have optional or no orthodontic needs. Sex, soft tissue profile, overjet, anterior crowding, and molar classification were significantly associated with the perception of need for braces while race and overbite were not. Clinical judgment of orthodontic need differed significantly among levels of satisfaction with teeth. Eighth graders with no history of orthodontic treatment were generally satisfied with the appearance of their teeth and perceived less need for braces than clinicians.

KEY WORDS: Malocclusion, Self-concept, Perceived need, Esthetics.

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