

# The State of Children's Dental Health: Making Coverage Matter

## Idaho

# B

2011 GRADE

**Idaho** meets five of the eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. Idaho led the nation in Medicaid utilization; in 2009, the state reported that more than two-thirds of enrolled children received dental care.

Oral health for low-income kids became an issue in the 2010 gubernatorial campaign when the company managing the Idaho Smiles program briefly reduced the number of dentists in its provider network.<sup>1</sup> The state still lags behind in regard to water fluoridation; less than one-third of Idaho's residents on community systems receive optimally fluoridated water.

### HOW WELL IS IDAHO RESPONDING?

2011: **B**

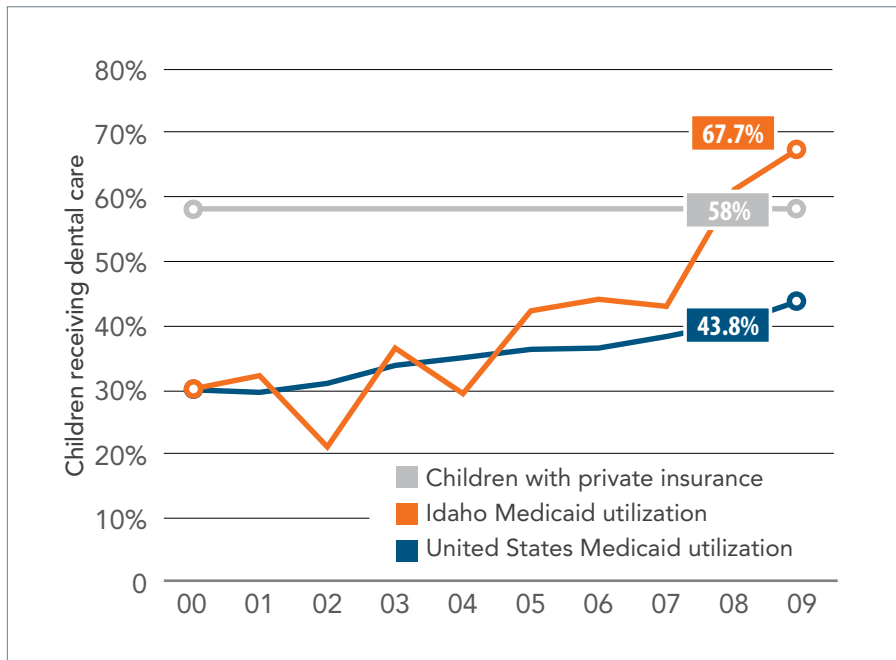
2010: **B**

DATA YEAR	MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS	MET OR EXCEEDED
2010	Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs	25-49%	25%	✓	✓
2010	Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam	YES	YES	✓	✓
2008	Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies	31.2%	75%		
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	67.7%	38.1%	✓	✓
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	43.0%	60.5%		
2010	Pays medical providers for early preventive dental health care	YES	YES	✓	✓
2010	Authorizes new primary care dental providers	NO	YES		
2010	Tracks data on children's dental health	YES	YES	✓	✓
<b>Total score</b>				<b>5 of 8</b>	<b>5 of 8</b>

**Grading: A = 6-8 points   B = 5 points   C = 4 points   D = 3 points   F = 0-2 points**

## HOW BAD IS THE PROBLEM?

Idaho reports the highest level of dental utilization of any state. Still, 1 in 3 Medicaid children received no dental service in 2009.



SOURCE: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS-416.

SOURCES FOR BENCHMARKS: (1, 2, 7) Pew Center on the States survey of states; (3) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; (4) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS-416; (5, 6) Medicaid/SCHIP Dental Association and American Academy of Pediatrics; (8) National Oral Health Surveillance System.

1. K. Soderlund, "DentaQuest reinstates Medicaid dentists in Idaho," American Dental Association News, October 25, 2010; <http://www.ada.org/news/4931.aspx>, (accessed December 6, 2010.)