



# The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children Idaho

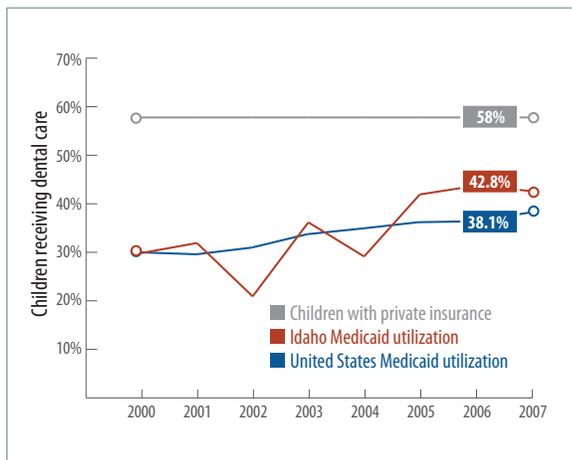
# B

GRADE

**IDAHO** meets five of eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. The percentage of Medicaid-enrolled children receiving care has increased in recent years, up from 30 percent in 2000 to 43 percent in 2007, the latest year for which data are available. Sealant programs are in place in more than one-quarter of high-risk schools, and they make efficient use of their hygienists. A statewide survey found that more than half of all third graders had sealants.<sup>1</sup> Idaho is one of only nine states, however, that has not provided fluoridated water to even half of its citizens as of 2006, the latest data available at the time of this writing. Less than one-third of the population on community supplies benefits from community water fluoridation. Idaho also falls short on the rate at which it reimburses dentists for serving Medicaid-enrolled children.

## HOW BAD IS THE PROBLEM?

**TOO MANY CHILDREN LACK ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE, WITH SEVERE OUTCOMES.** One measure of the problem: more than half of the children on Medicaid received no dental service in 2007.



SOURCES FOR NATIONAL BENCHMARKS: 1) Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors; 2) American Dental Hygienists' Association; 3) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS-416; 4) American Dental Association; 5) Pew Center on the States, National Academy for State Health Policy and American Academy of Pediatrics; 6) National Oral Health Surveillance System.

<sup>1</sup> National Oral Health Surveillance System, *Percentage of Third-Grade Students with Untreated Tooth Decay, and Percentage of Third-Grade Students with Dental Sealants*, <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/nohss/> (accessed July 8, 2009).

## HOW WELL IS IDAHO RESPONDING?

MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES

	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS
Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs, 2009	25-49%	25%	✓
Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies, 2006	31.3%	75%	
Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care, 2007	42.8%	38.1%	✓
Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid, 2008	46.7%	60.5%	
Pays medical providers for early preventive dental health care, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Authorizes new primary care dental providers, 2009	N	Y	
Tracks data on children's dental health, 2009	Y	Y	✓
<b>Total score</b>	<b>B</b>		<b>5 of 8</b>
Grading: A = 6-8 points; B = 5 points; C = 4 points; D = 3 points; F = 0-2 points			

Download the full report and explanatory notes by visiting [www.pewcenteronthestates.org/costofdelay](http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/costofdelay).



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