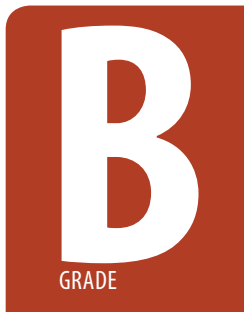




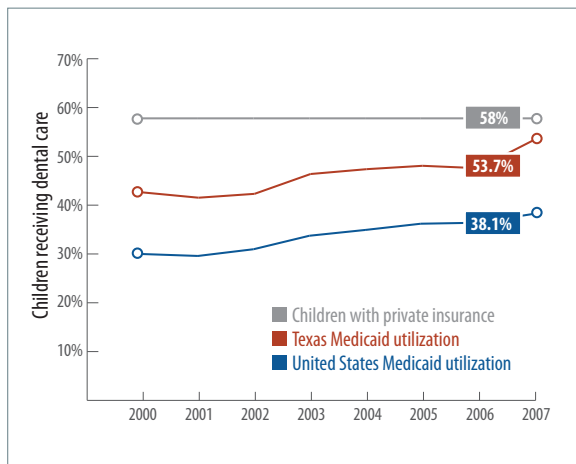
The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children Texas



TEXAS meets five of eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. The state has one of the highest Medicaid utilization rates in the country—with nearly 54 percent of Medicaid-enrolled children receiving dental services in 2007, the latest year for which data are available—and it reimburses dentists through Medicaid at a level that exceeds the national average. More than 78 percent of Texans on community water supplies benefit from water with optimal levels of fluoride. However, less than one-quarter of Texas' high-risk schools have sealant programs, and the state fails to report data to the National Oral Health Surveillance System. Dental workforce shortages pose a significant obstacle to accessing care in some areas. Pew calculates that the state requires at least 500 additional dentists to practice in its underserved areas. Grant funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was reduced in 2008, resulting in budget cuts for Texas' oral health program.

HOW BAD IS THE PROBLEM?

TOO MANY CHILDREN LACK ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE, WITH SEVERE OUTCOMES. One measure of the problem: 1 out of 2 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.

HOW WELL IS TEXAS 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%	25%	
Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies, 2006	78.1%	75%	✓
Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care, 2007	53.7%	38.1%	✓
Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid, 2008	70.7%	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	N	Y	
Total score	B		5 of 8

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.



The Pew Center on the States is a division of The Pew Charitable Trusts that identifies and advances effective solutions to critical issues facing states. Pew is a nonprofit organization that applies a rigorous, analytical approach to improve public policy, inform the public and stimulate civic life.

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