



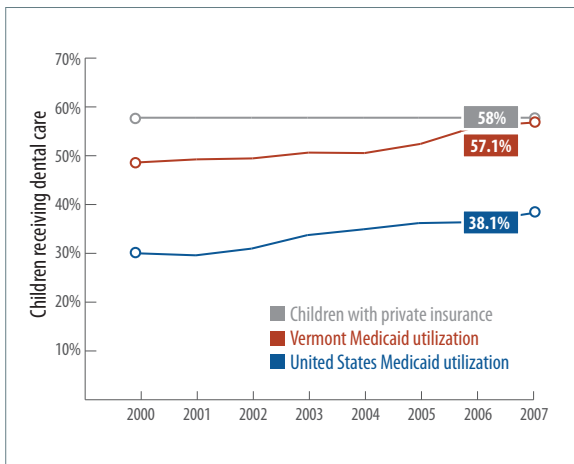
# The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children Vermont



**VERMONT** meets just half of the eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. Only about 59 percent of its citizens on community systems have access to optimally fluoridated water, and its high-risk schools lack sealant programs. Vermont's Medicaid reimbursement rate to dentists falls just shy of the national average. On the positive side, the state ranks the best in the nation for its Medicaid utilization rate: 57.1 percent of Medicaid-enrolled children received dental care in 2007, the latest year for which data are available. It also reimburses medical professionals for providing basic preventive dental services, although not yet fluoride varnish.

## 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 VERMONT RESPONDING?

MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES

	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS
Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs, 2009	0%	25%	
Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies, 2006	58.7%	75%	
Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care, 2007	57.1%	38.1%	✓
Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid, 2008	60%	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>C</b>		<b>4 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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