

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



2011 GRADE

**Michigan** meets half of the eight policy benchmarks for children's dental health needs. The birthplace of community water fluoridation (in 1945, Grand Rapids became the first city in the world to fluoridate), the state continues to provide optimally fluoridated water to nearly 90 percent of its residents on public systems.<sup>1</sup>

Legislators reinstated adult Medicaid dental benefits for fiscal year 2010, after cutting all of these services in the 2009 fiscal year.<sup>2</sup> Research indicates that parents who visit dentists are more likely to secure care for their children.<sup>3</sup>

## HOW WELL IS MICHIGAN RESPONDING?

2011: **C**

2010: **C**

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%	25%		
2010	Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam	YES	YES	✓	✓
2008	Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies	89.8%	75%	✓	✓
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	36.8%	38.1%		
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	45.9% <sup>5</sup>	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>4 of 8</b>	<b>4 of 8</b>

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

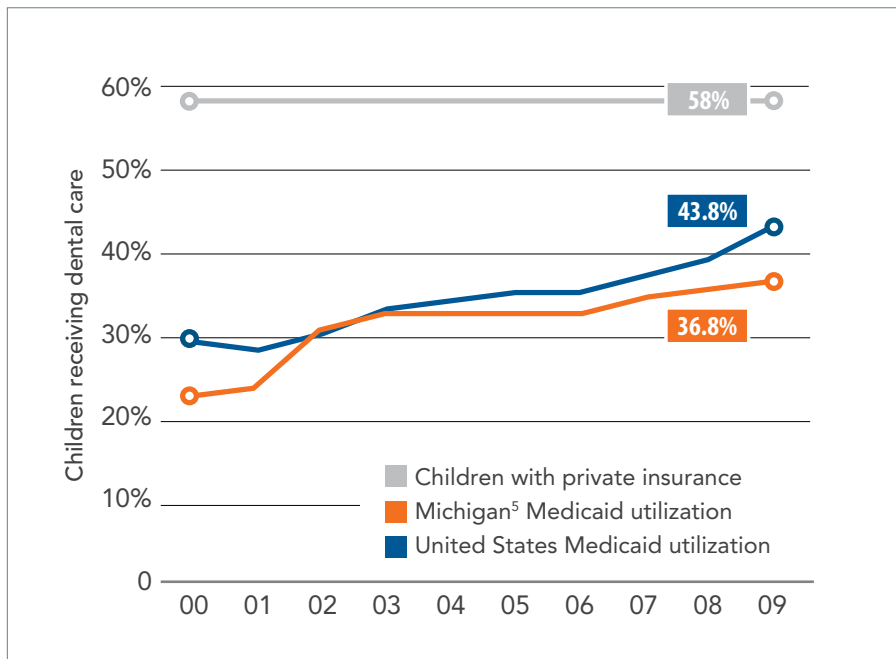


The Pew Center on the States is a division of The Pew Charitable Trusts that identifies and advances effective solutions to critical issues facing states. Pew is a nonprofit organization that applies a rigorous, analytical approach to improve public policy, inform the public and stimulate civic life.

Michigan has also released a new oral health plan, which provides a blueprint for further progress.<sup>4</sup> However, despite the success of the state’s Healthy Kids Dental program in rural areas, Michigan overall performance falls below Pew’s threshold for the percentage of Medicaid-enrolled children who receive care and for its Medicaid payment rates to dentists.

## 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 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. “Grand Rapids, Mich., Dedicates Historic Marker to Fluoridation,” ADA News (October 18, 2010) <http://www.ada.org/news/4907.aspx> (accessed December 10, 2010).

2. K. Kim, “Vision, Dental, Podiatry Reinstated for Medicaid” (September 21, 2010) <http://www.wilx.com/news/headlines/103493714.html> (accessed February 24, 2011).

3. “Children More Likely to Visit the Dentist If Their Parents Do, Too,” ScienceDaily, (February 16, 2010). <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/02/100201091634.htm> (accessed April 2011).

4. Michigan Department of Community Health, “Michigan Oral Health Plan,” (March 2010) [http://michigan.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/Michigan\\_State\\_Oral\\_Health\\_Plan\\_FINAL\\_2\\_326169\\_7.pdf](http://michigan.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/Michigan_State_Oral_Health_Plan_FINAL_2_326169_7.pdf) (accessed December 10, 2010).

5. Weighted average of fee-for-service and managed care payment rates.