

2010

MICHIGAN ORAL HEALTH COALITION

Issue Brief

Healthy Kids Dental

FACTS

- More than 300,000 Medicaid-eligible children under the age of 21 in 61 of Michigan's 83 counties are eligible to participate.
- Compared to children enrolled in the state-administered Medicaid dental program, Healthy Kids Dental children were 60.6% more likely to receive preventive dental care by age 3 and 25% less likely to have used emergency dental care by age 3.
- In counties with Healthy Kids Dental, utilization of dental services is closer to that of privately insured children.
- In addition, children with Healthy Kids Dental coverage travel, on average, 7.6 miles to receive dental care as compared to 24.5 miles under the state-administered Medicaid dental program. As you can imagine, the availability of care closer to home has a significant positive impact on access to care.

About Us

Since 2004, the Michigan Oral Health Coalition has been a leader in the oral health access movement in Michigan. With more than 140 members--consumers, dentists, hygienists and dental assistants as well as universities, community health centers, dental benefit providers, professional associations and local health departments—we work together to improve the oral health of Michigan's residents.



A NATIONAL MODEL

Tooth decay is the most common chronic infectious disease among children. Eighty percent of the disease occurs in 20% of the population. Low-income children have twice the amount of untreated decay, as children in families with higher incomes. This may result in pain, dysfunction, and loss of weight, and poor appearance— problems that can greatly reduce a child's ability to succeed educationally and socially. But unlike other diseases, tooth decay is preventable if youngsters have access to oral health care at an early age.

Michigan currently has a nationally recognized program Healthy Kids Dental, which greatly improves access for Medicaid-eligible children. The Michigan Department of Community Health contracts with Delta Dental of Michigan to capitalize on the Delta Dental's network of dental providers. As a result, approximately 75% of Michigan dentists participate in Healthy Kids Dental. This program has been tremendously successful in the 61 counties where it is currently in use.

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

"Since 2000, when it began as a pilot program, Healthy Kids Dental has proven to be one of the nation's most effective public-private partnerships in delivering care to some of our state's most vulnerable residents." - Governor Jennifer M. Granholm

"Our children deserve access to quality dental care and this program plays a key role by providing that care." - Janet Olszewski, Director, Michigan Department of Community Health

"The Healthy Kids Dental Program has been very successful," said Senator Roger Kahn, (R-Saginaw Township). "It has given our most needy children the chance to receive dental care in a consistent and convenient way."

Healthy Kids Dental was named by the American Dental Association as a top five model for improving access to dental care for low-income populations.

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry has adopted Healthy Kids Dental as a model program for other states.

In a recent Scantron Corporation survey, nearly 99% of parents and caregivers said they were satisfied with the Healthy Kids Dental program and 92% said the program had improved their child's health.