



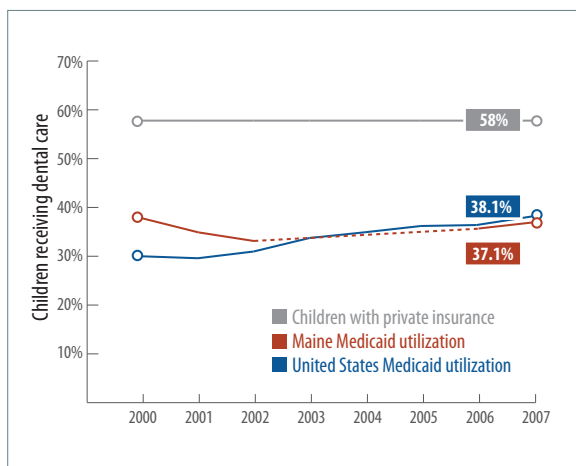
# The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children Maine



**MAINE** meets five of eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children’s dental health needs. Nearly 80 percent of Maine residents have access to optimally fluoridated water systems, and sealant programs reach 75 percent of high-risk schools. The state falls short on other important benchmarks, including the rate of Medicaid reimbursement for dentists—and only 37 percent of Medicaid-enrolled children received dental care in 2007, the latest year for which data are available, just under the national average. The state has not yet authorized a new primary care dental professional.

## 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.

Maine did not submit Medicaid data in 2003, 2004 and 2005.

## HOW WELL IS MAINE RESPONDING?

MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES

	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS
Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs, 2009	75-100%	25%	✓
Hygienists can place sealants without dentist’s prior exam, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies, 2006	79.6%	75%	✓
Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care, 2007	37.1%	38.1%	
Share of dentists’ median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid, 2008	40.5%	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).



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.

901 E Street NW | 10<sup>th</sup> Floor | Washington, DC 20004 | [www.pewcenteronthestates.org](http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org)