

State Children's Health Insurance Program

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) has become an important source of coverage for children and families. SCHIP and Medicaid together have contributed to the decline in uninsured children from 14% of all children in 1997 to 9% in 2005. SCHIP needs to be reauthorized in 2007 with substantial new funding if the program is to maintain and build on its successes.

SCHIP State Snapshots: Alabama All Kids



	2005 Enrollment	Federal Match Rate ¹
Alabama	64,342	79.6%
United States	6.1 million	65%–85%

Basic Program Facts

States have three options for SCHIP programs:

- Separate SCHIP program (S-SCHIP)
- Medicaid expansion program (M-SCHIP)
- Combination of both

Alabama runs a separate SCHIP program.

Eligibility

SCHIP was enacted to provide health coverage to targeted low income children. Federal rules and waivers allow states to set their income eligibility at levels that are higher or lower than the target level of 200% of the federal poverty level (\$43,300 for a family of four in 2007). States that cover families at higher income levels usually require some cost sharing.

Alabama is one of 23 states that set eligibility for coverage at 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL).

Program Type by Age	Eligibility as % of FPL	Premium Requirement
Separate SCHIP		
0–5 yrs	133%–200%	\$50–\$100
6–18 yrs	100%–200%	\$50–\$100

Cost Sharing

Many SCHIP programs require enrollees to share in the cost of coverage or services by paying premiums or co-payments. The type of SCHIP program a state has determines its flexibility in establishing cost-sharing requirements. M-SCHIP programs have less flexibility than S-SCHIP programs.

Alabama requires annual premiums based on an income scale that ranges from \$50 per child (\$150 maximum) for families with incomes up to 150% FPL to \$100 per child (\$300 maximum) for families with incomes at or above 150% FPL.

Benefit Package

All SCHIP Medicaid expansion programs must provide the federally required Medicaid benefit package. Separate SCHIP programs must offer benefits meeting federal requirements under a number of options.

Alabama's Separate SCHIP Covered Benefits include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- Physician services
- Inpatient hospital care
- Inpatient and outpatient mental health services
- Inpatient and outpatient substance abuse services
- Family planning
- Home health services
- Pharmacy
- Dental preventive services and dental treatments
- Hearing aids
- Vision examination and eyeglasses
- Prosthetic appliances

Outreach, Enrollment and Retention

Because application, enrollment, and renewal processes are critical in reaching SCHIP's goal of reducing the number of uninsured children, states have worked on outreach and simplification efforts to enroll and retain children in SCHIP programs.

Alabama's efforts include (but are not limited to):

- Continuous eligibility guarantee for 12 months, which reduces the chance that children will have breaks in coverage or be dropped from the program for failure to complete paperwork
- Follow-up phone calls are made to the family to request additional information needed to determine Medicaid eligibility/enrollment
- Pay\$mart is a helpline with trained customer service representatives who provide annual premium budgeting advice, which include payment options to families.

Access to Primary Care Physicians in 2004

Age	Percent
12–24 mths	95%
2–6 yrs	88%
7–11 yrs	89%
12–18 yrs	87%

¹ Source for 2005 Federal Match Rate values: Kaiser statehealthfacts.org, "Federal Matching Rate (FMAP) for SCHIP," accessed on May 14, 2007.

² Source for state specific HEDIS measure data are state FY2005 SCHIP Annual Reports to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which are available at www.cms.hhs.gov.

Unless otherwise specified, the data source used is: Kaye, Neva, et al. *Charting CHIP III: An Analysis of the Third Comprehensive Survey of State Children's Health Insurance Programs*, National Academy for State Health Policy (September 2006). Available at <http://www.chipcentral.org>.

Quality²

Since program inception, SCHIP programs have implemented various policies to promote access to quality care. States worked with the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to develop a set of performance measures that states could report annually. Four core measures based on the Health Plan Employer Data and Information Set (HEDIS) were chosen:

- Well child visits for infants under 15 months
- Well child visits for children ages 3, 4, 5, and 6
- Use of appropriate asthma medications
- Access to primary care providers (PCP)

Alabama provided data on all four measures in its 2005 annual report to CMS, which is the most recent report available. The data to the left is an example from Alabama's report.

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These fact state sheets were made possible by a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The views presented here are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the directors, officers, and staff of the Packard Foundation.