



## **Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive!**

### **CMS Efforts to Ensure Children Receive Developmental and Behavioral Screening**

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Education launched [Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive!](#) to highlight the importance of universal developmental and behavioral screening of young children. Screening at recommended intervals during early childhood is essential to identify possible delays in growth and development, when steps to address any deficits can be most effective.

Periodic developmental and behavioral health screenings are required for all children enrolled in Medicaid, through the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit, and they are also covered for children enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Federal matching funds are available for states that provide additional reimbursement to providers who perform developmental and behavioral screenings during a well-child visit.

CMS encourages state Medicaid and CHIP programs to assist in disseminating the **Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive!** compendium and related materials to key stakeholders and to primary care providers in order to inform them about the available tools, to support them in providing all the recommended screenings to young children, and to help them educate parents and caretakers about [milestones](#) of normal growth and development and to [learn the signs](#) of developmental delay.

CMS ongoing efforts to support and ensure screening of young children include:

#### **Child Core Set Measure: Developmental Screening in the First Three Years of Life**

Included in the CMS core set of children's health care quality measures (Child Core Set) is [Developmental Screening in the First Three Years of Life](#).<sup>1</sup> This measure can be used to track how Medicaid and CHIP programs are performing in evaluating the growth and development of very young children. To help states collect and report data on this measure, CMS hosted a webinar in June 2013: [Developmental Screening in the First Three Years of Life: Understanding How to Collect and Use the Child Core Set Measure](#).

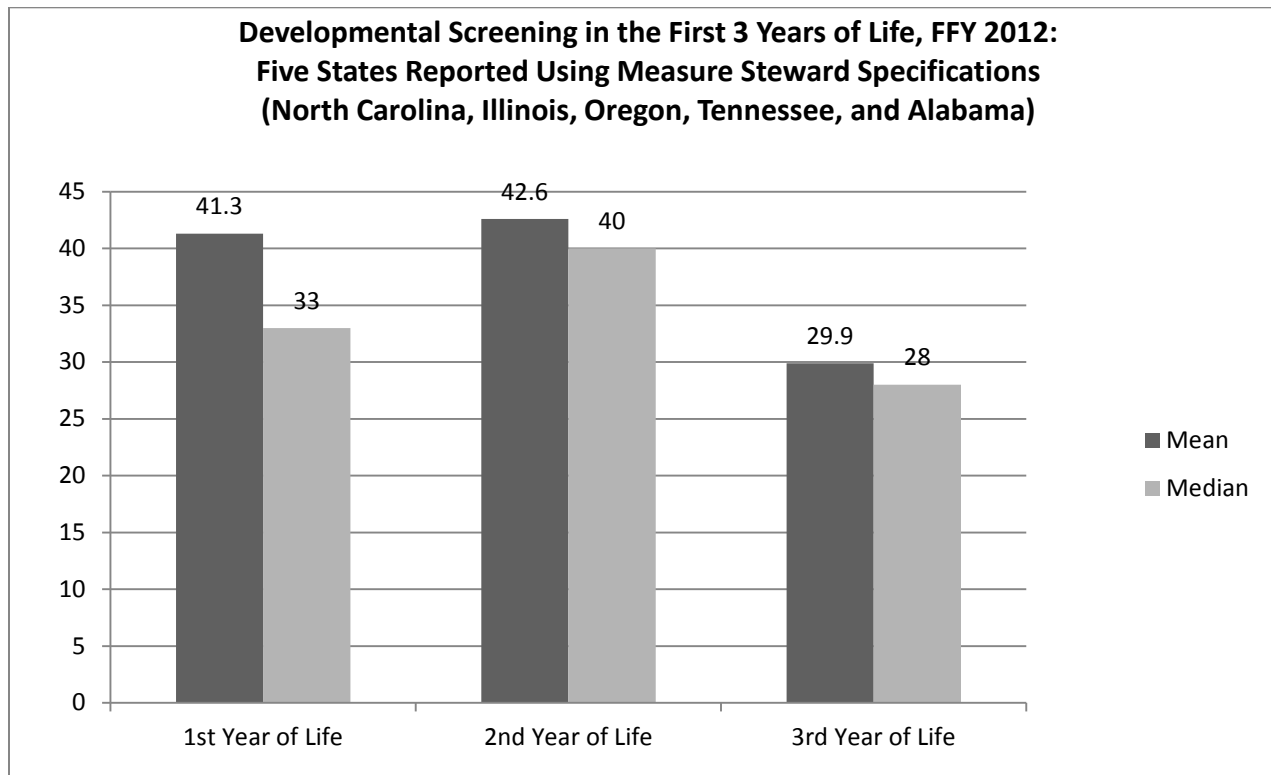
#### **State Reporting on the Developmental Screening Measure**

Over the past three years there has been progress in state reporting on the *Developmental Screening in the First Three Years of Life* measure. The number of state Medicaid programs reporting according to the measure's specifications increased from two states in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2010 to 11 states in FFY 2012. Twelve states reported in FFY 2013, with seven states reporting the measure for both their Medicaid and CHIP populations. Six additional states indicated that they plan to report the measure in future years. To support states in collecting and reporting this measure, CMS provides technical assistance that can be requested via an email to [MACqualityTA@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:MACqualityTA@cms.hhs.gov).

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<sup>1</sup> Measure steward is Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU).

In the five Medicaid programs reporting according to the measure's specifications<sup>2</sup> in both FFY 2011 and 2012, an average of 41 percent, 43 percent and 30 percent of children were screened in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> years of life in FFY 2012 (see figure below). North Carolina was the top performing state, with 77 percent of children screened in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of life, 81 percent screened in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of life, and 65 percent screened during the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of life.



Source: Mathematica Policy Research analysis of FFY 2012 CARTS Reports

### Developmental Screening in the CHIPRA Quality Demonstration Grants

In 2010, CMS launched its [Children's Quality Demonstration Grant Program](#) with ten grantees across 18 states. As part of its grant program, [Pennsylvania](#) is working with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to improve the quality of care for children with developmental and behavioral needs in its Medicaid/CHIP programs and to leverage health information technology to maximize early identification of children with developmental and behavioral health concerns. Standardized screening tools were built into the electronic health record system and the system alerts provider staff to age appropriate screens at the time of a patient's check-in.

### CMS Resources for State Medicaid and CHIP Agencies

- An [Informational bulletin](#) released on March 27, 2013: *Prevention and Early Identification of Mental Health and Substance Use Conditions in Children*.
- A July 23, 2013 [State director letter](#) for state programs serving vulnerable children, developed in partnership with the Administration for Children and Families and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- An [EPSDT Resource Compendium developed by](#) the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) with support from CMS that includes state-specific efforts on developmental and behavioral screenings. NASHP's website also includes a [resource center](#) for its Assuring Better Child Development (ABCD) III initiative, focused on [developmental screening](#). A number of states participating in this initiative have collected and reported on the Child Core measure, *Developmental Screening in the First Three Years of Life*, described above.

<sup>2</sup> To ensure comparability, only data from states reporting according to the measure's specifications is described.