



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Alabama ranks high in children's health care, national study finds

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alabama has been ranked as one of the best states for children's health care, according to a study conducted by the Commonwealth Fund, a private foundation that studies health issues and supports efforts to cover more people. Alabama ranked 13th overall and was an exception to trends in other southern states.

The study analyzed 13 measures of children's care including access, quality and costs. Overall, Iowa ranked first and Oklahoma ranked last.

Factors considered included the following:

- Vaccinations – The percentage of children who received five recommended vaccinations from ages 19 months to 35 months.
- Insurance – The percentage of uninsured children
- Preventative visits to the doctor

Commonwealth Fund president Karen Davis was quoted in USA Today as saying, "Certainly with regard to Alabama, it was a matter of leadership. The state was the first one to take advantage of the state child health care program in 1997. It was also very efficient at forging a public-private partnership specifically with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama."

The report uses data from government agencies as well as private groups such as the Kaiser Family Foundation, a non-partisan research group. Nationally, the State Children's Health Insurance Program has reduced the percentage of uninsured low-income children by 25 percent from 1996 to 2006.

The report concluded that there is a high correlation between access to care and the quality of care a child receives.

Alabama is tied with Connecticut and Nebraska at 13th. Other states which ranked high include Vermont, 2nd; Maine, 3rd; Massachusetts, 4th. Tennessee ranked 30th, Georgia ranked 38th, Mississippi ranked 49th and Florida ranked 50th in the children's care study.

ALL Kids provides health care coverage for children in working families whose income is above Medicaid limits and below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (approximately \$42,000 for a family of four).

Administered by the Alabama Department of Public Health, ALL Kids shares a joint application with the Alabama Medicaid Agency and the Alabama Child Caring Program to assure that children are referred to the appropriate program. In fiscal year 2007 approximately 23,000 children were referred to Medicaid, and nearly 6,000 were referred to the Caring Program.

ALL Kids has made a significant impact on the health of Alabama's children, providing coverage for over 200,000 children in the past 10 years. For more information visit www.adph.org/allkids/.

6/3/08