

Developmental Screening in Vermont

An all-payer claims database evaluation of developmental screening trends in Vermont.



Overview

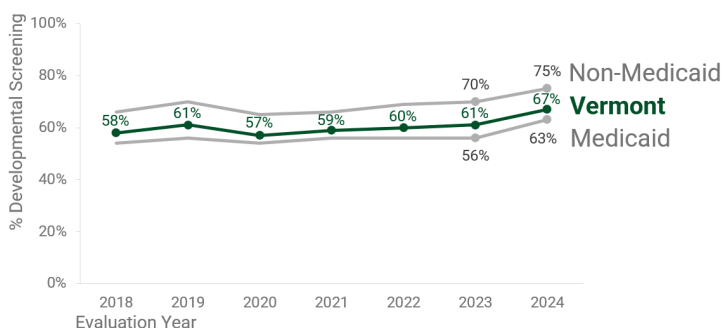
Developmental screening provides insight into a child's early learning, growth, and achievement of milestones during the first three years of life and is used to determine the need for further evaluation or intervention services. Developmental screening percentages are used as indicators of high-quality health care and are tied to quality payment initiatives statewide.

The Health Services Research (HSR) Team at the Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP) leveraged Vermont's all-payer insurance claims database (VHCURES) to measure the proportion of one- to three-year-old Vermont children with at least one developmental screening from 2018-2024 using the "Developmental Screening in the First Three Years of Life"¹ (DEV-CH) measure.

Key Findings

- Developmental screening percentages in 2024 are higher than in any year since 2018.
- 2024 had the highest single-year change (+6%) since 2018.
- Children with Medicaid insurance continue to have lower developmental screening percentages than those with non-Medicaid insurance, with a -12% difference in 2024.

Percentage of Children with a Developmental Screen in **Vermont**¹ and by **Insurance Type**², 2018-2024



SOURCE: VCHIP analysis of VHCURES extracts #3007, #3008, #3011, #3015

¹Vermont is the population defined by the DEV-CH measure: children in VHCURES who turned one, two, or three years old in the calendar year and had continuous medical insurance coverage with no gap greater than one month in the 12 months prior to their first, second, or third birthday.

²Insurance type defined as fewer than 6 months of Medicaid insurance (non-Medicaid)/6 or more months of Medicaid insurance (Medicaid)

Note: The Vermont Health Care Uniform Reporting and Evaluation System (VHCURES) data are under the stewardship of the Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB). The analyses, conclusions, and recommendations from the VHCURES data are solely those of the study authors and are not necessarily those of the GMCB. The GMCB had no input into the study design, implementation, or interpretation of the findings.

Activities and Efforts in Vermont

Multiple efforts have supported the provision of developmental screening per the American Academy of Pediatrics Bright Futures guidelines, with recent efforts listed below:

- **Clinical Quality Improvement:**
 - In partnership with the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) Family and Child Health Division, VCHIP works with primary care practices on [quality improvement \(QI\) projects](#) to identify strategies for practice improvement. Developmental screening was the focus of QI projects in 2012, 2017, and 2024.
- **Systems and Technology Improvements:**
 - VDH built a [Developmental Screening Registry](#) allowing screening results to be securely shared across clinical and community settings to ensure children are connected to developmental services.
 - Help Me Grow Vermont provides free online [Ages and Stages Questionnaires](#) for developmental screening for primary care practices and families.
 - VCHIP became the [Touchpoints](#) Center for Vermont, providing a practical, preventive approach that supports professionals in forming strengths-based partnerships with families².

Data Notes

- Chi-squared statistical tests were used to compare the proportion of children with a developmental screening between years overall, and within insurance groups. For all statistical tests, we used an alpha level of .05 to indicate statistical significance.
- Developmental screening is defined by the DEV-CH measure: presence of at least one claim with Current Procedural Terminology (CPT-10) 96110 in the 12 months leading up to the child's first, second, or third birthday.

References

1. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (2025). *Core Set of Children's Health Care Quality Measures for Medicaid and CHIP (Child Core Set)*. Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services. <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/downloads/medicaid-and-chip-child-core-set-manual.pdf>
2. Ayoub, C. & Vele-Tabaddor, E. (2018). Enhancing early care provider's capacity for building early relationships with families and their children: Touchpoints-informed practice. In A. S. Morris & A. C. Williamson (Eds.), *Building early social and emotional relationships with infants and toddlers: Integrating research and practice* (pp. 259–275). Springer Nature Switzerland AG. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03110-7_11