

## Division of Maternal & Child Health

### BRIEF: Developmental Screening

*The vision of the Division of Maternal and Child Health is that the health and wellness of Vermont’s women, children, and families is a foundation for the health of all Vermonters. We work to achieve this vision through strategies that are family centered, evidence-based, and data driven.*

#### Priority Area

Achieve a comprehensive, coordinated, and integrated state and community system of services for children

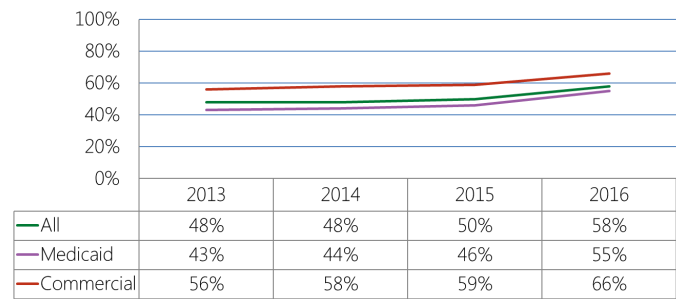
#### Performance Measure

% of children, ages 10 through 71 months, receiving a developmental screening using a parent-completed screening tool

**Introduction.** Early identification of children at risk for developmental delays and disabilities is critical to the well-being of children and their families. It is an integral function of the primary care medical home. The percent of children with a developmental or behavioral disorder has been increasing, yet overall screening rates have remained low. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends screening tests begin at the nine month visit in order to identify children at risk for behavioral and developmental delays and in need of early intervention and/or further assessment, including vulnerable populations (culturally and linguistically diverse, living in poverty, etc). As part of our Healthy Vermonters 2020 and the MCH strategic plan, considerable work has occurred over the past decade in Vermont to advance developmental screening in medical home settings.

**Results.** According to data from the Vermont Blueprint for Health, the rate of developmental screening has significantly increased among Vermont children ages 0 to 3 from 48% in 2013 to 58% in 2016.

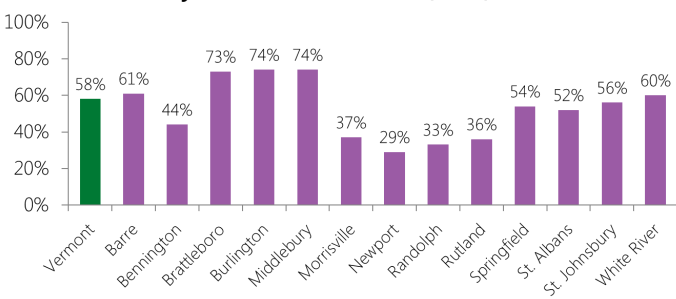
**developmental screening in the first 3 years of life, by insurance type, 2013-2016**



Source: Vermont Blueprint for Health, 2013 through 2016

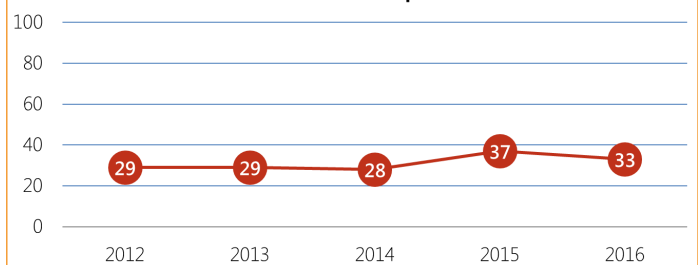
- However, a disparity exists between children insurance by Medicaid (55%) and those insured by commercial insurance (66%).
- Differences also exist in screening rates among Health Service Areas (HSA) in Vermont, with Middlebury (74%), Burlington (74%), and Brattleboro (73%) with the highest rates.
- A survey of 46 primary care practices by Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP) found developmental screening rates at 33% for all three recommended screens.

**developmental screening in the first 3 years of life by health service area (HSA), 2016**



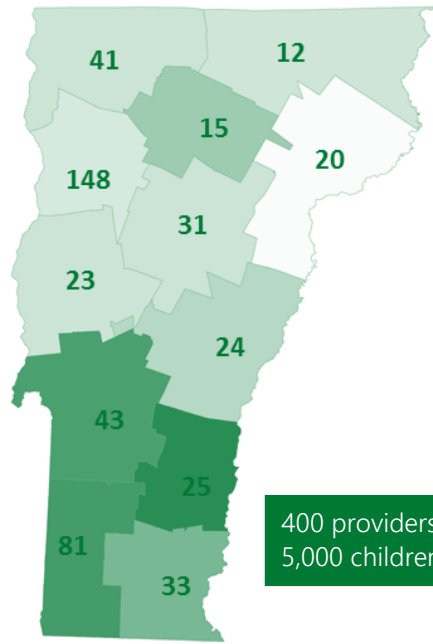
Source: Vermont Blueprint for Health, 2016

**% of children with three developmental screens of those who attended their 9, 18, 24, and 30 month health supervision visits**



Source: CHAMP 2016 Network Data Report (46 Practices | 663 records)

## Early Care & Education Providers Trained in Developmental Screening



400 providers trained  
5,000 children served

**Early Care and Education (ECE) programs** play an increasingly significant role in supporting children's healthy development. Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP) is currently training and coaching ECE providers to promote ongoing monitoring of child development, including periodic developmental screening, referral to appropriate services, and access to services to support each child's developmental progression in the context of a collaborative and well-coordinated system of care.

CDC's "**Learn the Signs. Act Early.**" (LTSAE) program aims to increase parent-engaged developmental monitoring, as a complement to developmental screening, across all childhood service delivery systems. The LTSAE program works with *Help Me Grow* and other federal and state initiatives to provide free, research-based, parent-friendly materials designed to help parents and providers track developmental milestones to empower parents and providers to act early on developmental concerns.

The new **Universal Developmental Screening Registry**, is a centralized database where providers can enter screening results and track screenings completed for all Vermont children.

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Vermont communities are already using the Universal Developmental Screening Registry

## Vermont Strategies.

- Implement **Help Me Grow** Vermont – HMG is comprehensive system that ensures early detection leads to the linkage of at-risk children and their families to community-based programs and services and medical homes.
- In partnership with the Vermont Child Health Improvement Program, provide leadership to the Child Health Advances Measured in Practice (CHAMP) project, a voluntary **quality improvement** project that monitors measures of health care, including developmental screening and identifies strategies for **practice improvement**.
- Refine and promote **Vermont's Universal Developmental Screening protocol**.
- ▲ Provide **training to professionals** in the selection and implementation of appropriate, psychometrically **valid developmental screening tools**, in alignment with [AAP/Bright Futures Guidelines](#).
- ▲ Embed **developmental monitoring tools and resources in early childhood settings** using CDC's "*Learn the Signs. Act Early.*"
- MCH leadership participates in the **Vermont Home Visiting Alliance** responsible for developing core training and data standards across VT home visiting programs, which includes developmental screening.
- **Strengthen partnerships with Vermont's ACOs** to leverage opportunities to focus on improving developmental screening rates.

## Data Issues.

Data from the Vermont Blueprint for Health and the VCHIP CHAMP Summary Report do not represent all Vermont children, based on attribution and sampling methodology.

## Data Sources.

[2016 National Survey of Children's Health \(NSCH\)](#)  
[VCHIP CHAMP Network Data Summary Report Findings](#)  
[Vermont Blueprint for Health Community Health Profiles](#)

## Contact.

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