

A comprehensive overview of Medicaid's EPSDT program

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Timely screening examinations and necessary medical treatment are needed to maintain and improve children's health. Children living in poverty (nearly 12 million children under age 18 in the United States, or 16.6 percent of U.S. children) are at particular risk for health problems. Thus, the Medicaid Act entitles them to comprehensive screening and treatment through a service called Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT).

More than 20 percent of all children in the United States, one in five, are covered by Medicaid and thus entitled to EPSDT. Individuals who are working on behalf of children should be familiar with the EPSDT benefit.

This 97-page manual provides comprehensive information about EPSDT and offers practical suggestions for working with and improving the EPSDT program. It is organized as follows:

Part I provides background information on the needs of children and youth.

Part II gives a basic overview of the Medicaid program

Part III discusses the legal requirements for EPSDT

Part IV describes common barriers and offers examples of how these problems can be

addressed.

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