

Section 1 Introduction - Maryland Healthy Kids/ Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program

A. OVERVIEW

Medicaid, or Medical Assistance (MA), is a joint federal and state program authorized under Title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide health and long-term care coverage to low-income people and others in certain categories. The State Medicaid Program is operated within the **Maryland Department of Health (MDH)**. Maryland Medicaid also operates similar programs for moderate to low-income children, who are not eligible for Medicaid. These are the [*Maryland Children's Health Program \(MCHP\)*](#) and MCHP Premium Programs. Since Medicaid, MCHP, and MCHP Premium provide children with the same comprehensive benefit package, this Manual will generally refer to the Programs as Medicaid/MCHP.

Most children in Medicaid/MCHP receive services through the [*Maryland HealthChoice Program*](#), a Statewide Medicaid managed care program. HealthChoice beneficiaries enroll in [one of nine managed care organizations \(MCO\)](#). MCOs that participate in the HealthChoice program are responsible for providing the full range of health care services covered by the Medicaid fee-for-service program, except for certain Medicaid-covered benefits that are “carved-out” and made available to enrollees outside the MCOs.

The Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program is a federal requirement that mandates that States cover certain benefits for Medicaid recipients from birth through 20 years of age that are not necessarily covered for individuals 21 years of age and older. The Program came into existence in 1967 after Congress passed the Section 1905(r) Amendment to the Social Security Act. States are allowed to develop their own EPSDT periodicity schedule with input from medical societies and organizations involved in child health.

In Maryland, the preventive care component of the EPSDT Program is known as the [*Healthy Kids Program*](#). The preventive health care services allow for early identification and treatment of health problems before they become medically complex and costly to treat.

Standards for the Healthy Kids Program are developed through collaboration with key stakeholders such as the MDH, the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the University of Maryland School of Dentistry and the Maryland Department of the Environment.

The [*Maryland Healthy Kids Preventive Health Schedule*](#) (Refer to Section 2) closely correlates to the American Academy of Pediatrics periodicity schedule. The primary purpose of this manual is to provide clinical and administrative guidance in the implementation of the required preventive care standards of the Maryland Healthy Kids/EPSDT Program.