

# Children in Foster Care: National and State Summary

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**The Menges Group**

# National Overview, Children in Foster Care

- Just under 1 million children (993,000) were in foster care for at least part of 2010.
- On average during 2010, 885,000 foster children were covered by Medicaid (derived by dividing total months of coverage by 12).
- Average Medicaid costs per foster child were \$6,476 in 2010, ranging from a low of \$3,217 in Washington State to a high of \$20,084 in Vermont.
- Nationwide, per capita Medicaid costs for foster children were stable from 2005-2010, increasing only 0.2% per year.

# National Distribution of Medicaid Expenditures on Foster Children, by Type of Service, 2010

Category of Service	2010 Expenditure	Percent Distribution
CAPITATED CARE	\$996,153,372	18.0%
PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES	\$746,641,251	13.5%
PRESCRIBED DRUGS	\$701,847,326	12.7%
MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY	\$510,532,176	9.2%
CLINIC	\$498,178,766	9.0%
INPATIENT HOSPITAL	\$432,184,489	7.8%
PHYSICIAN	\$202,077,021	3.7%
OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL	\$167,804,549	3.0%
DENTAL	\$118,987,419	2.2%
HOME HEALTH	\$113,130,208	2.0%
OTHER PRACTITIONER	\$55,608,522	1.0%
ICF/MR	\$48,175,358	0.9%
LAB AND X-RAY SVCS	\$45,836,902	0.8%
NURSING FACILITY SVCS	\$16,285,389	0.3%
ALL OTHER	\$870,516,176	15.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,523,958,924</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

- Less than one-fifth of Medicaid expenditures on children in foster care occur through capitation payments to health plans.
- Expenditures on mental health facilities are greater than general inpatient hospital expenditures. This is indicative of the significant behavioral health challenges faced by some children in foster care.
- More detailed, state-specific data analyses consistently show that the foster care population has a high prevalence of behavioral health conditions. Often more than half of a state's foster care children have behavioral health diagnoses.

2010 Idaho and Missouri data were not available.

# State Summary of 2010 Costs for Children in Foster Care

State	Medicaid Expenditures	Average Covered Persons	Average Medicaid Costs Per Person	Rank in 2010 Cost Per Person	Average Annual % Change in Costs Per Person, 2005-2010
Vermont	\$45,652,853	2,376	\$19,211	1	0.5%
Nevada	\$122,609,533	7,532	\$16,279	2	13.5%
New Hampshire	\$29,996,044	2,148	\$13,962	3	0.1%
Kentucky	\$178,509,618	13,546	\$13,178	4	1.5%
Rhode Island	\$64,540,159	5,159	\$12,511	5	-13.0%
South Dakota	\$47,599,721	3,886	\$12,251	6	11.5%
Oklahoma	\$101,143,715	8,553	\$11,826	7	4.8%
Alaska	\$36,337,836	3,156	\$11,514	8	-1.8%
Alabama	\$98,098,591	9,321	\$10,524	9	-4.3%
Minnesota	\$98,354,570	9,630	\$10,214	10	2.2%
New Mexico	\$49,588,101	4,907	\$10,106	11	-3.3%
Wyoming	\$26,449,408	2,673	\$9,895	12	2.8%
Arkansas	\$69,240,245	7,006	\$9,883	13	1.2%
Maryland	\$163,610,111	16,585	\$9,865	14	9.5%
North Carolina	\$184,279,430	18,912	\$9,744	15	-0.1%
West Virginia	\$77,618,897	7,979	\$9,727	16	-1.4%
Virginia	\$124,326,459	12,840	\$9,683	17	1.3%
District of Columbia	\$49,925,499	5,270	\$9,474	18	-11.5%
North Dakota	\$17,216,210	1,835	\$9,383	19	-2.9%
Montana	\$33,482,897	3,677	\$9,106	20	2.4%
Delaware	\$16,467,297	1,813	\$9,084	21	-5.1%
Utah	\$72,014,171	7,939	\$9,071	22	-2.3%
New Jersey	\$226,226,815	25,350	\$8,924	23	-3.3%
New York	\$423,941,147	49,923	\$8,492	24	2.9%
Colorado	\$141,954,697	17,581	\$8,075	25	-5.1%

State	Medicaid Expenditures	Average Covered Persons	Average Medicaid Costs Per Person	Rank in 2010 Cost Per Person	Average Annual % Change in Costs Per Person, 2005-2010
Kansas	\$109,343,560	13,775	\$7,938	26	-2.4%
Nebraska	\$89,716,573	11,926	\$7,523	27	-3.2%
Texas	\$487,706,095	66,383	\$7,347	28	-2.7%
Mississippi	\$39,395,071	5,679	\$6,938	29	3.2%
Missouri	\$194,394,089	28,142	\$6,908	30	-0.8%
Connecticut	\$41,299,538	6,073	\$6,801	31	16.2%
South Carolina	\$78,823,242	12,771	\$6,172	32	-8.7%
Iowa	\$62,726,627	10,222	\$6,136	33	-0.5%
Idaho	\$14,743,248	2,611	\$5,646	34	1.3%
Georgia	\$143,985,465	26,634	\$5,406	35	-5.0%
Illinois	\$278,226,332	52,444	\$5,305	36	7.3%
Louisiana	\$53,906,254	10,268	\$5,250	37	5.5%
Massachusetts	\$3,006,063	617	\$4,876	38	-0.6%
Oregon	\$82,918,407	17,105	\$4,848	39	-8.0%
Wisconsin	\$72,614,616	15,030	\$4,831	40	-0.6%
Arizona	\$74,241,991	15,644	\$4,746	41	0.1%
Florida	\$202,694,278	43,752	\$4,633	42	-1.5%
Indiana	\$90,012,651	20,709	\$4,346	43	-2.6%
Pennsylvania	\$189,714,596	43,795	\$4,332	44	-1.2%
California	\$570,700,753	133,663	\$4,270	45	0.6%
Michigan	\$56,474,051	13,237	\$4,266	46	8.6%
Tennessee	\$73,362,491	17,343	\$4,230	47	-2.6%
Hawaii	\$22,095,477	5,675	\$3,893	48	-1.0%
Ohio	\$125,914,192	38,562	\$3,265	49	-4.3%
Maine	\$10,485,215	3,233	\$3,243	50	-25.7%
Washington	\$65,411,362	20,331	\$3,217	51	4.3%
USA TOTAL	\$5,733,096,261	885,220	\$6,476		0.2%

# Distribution of Foster Children by Age, 2010

Age Group	Number of Foster Children	Number of Foster Children Per Single Year Age Cohort
<b>Under 1</b>	11,558	11,558
<b>1-5</b>	173,644	34,729
<b>6-12</b>	299,526	42,789
<b>13-14</b>	94,516	47,258
<b>15-18</b>	223,280	55,820
<b>19+</b>	51,943	17,314
<b>Total</b>	<b>854,467</b>	

Tabulation of number of children represents covered months divided by 12. Idaho and Missouri data were not available.

- While 57% of foster children are age 12 and under, there are more foster children in the older single-year age increments (e.g., there are more 16 year olds in foster care than 8 year olds).
- Gender mix of foster children is 52.1% male, 47.9% female.

# Technical Notes

- Data sources used for tabulations are the CMS Medicaid Statistical Information System (MSIS) website:  
[msis.cms.hhs.gov](http://msis.cms.hhs.gov)
- Data provided for Idaho and Missouri are from 2009; for all other states 2010 data are shown.