

## Data Trends

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From the Research and Training Center for Children's Mental Health,  
Tampa, Florida...

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This News brief alerts you to a new report from the Urban Institute (2004), Squeezing SCHIP: States use flexibility to respond to the ongoing budget crisis.

As part of the Urban Institute's multiyear Assessing the New Federalism project, the authors interviewed SCHIP administrators in 13 states. Although cuts to SCHIP in FY 2003 were more widespread than in 2002, the authors gleaned some heartening news from the assessment. For example, only two states reduced benefits for children, and 2/3rds of the states simplified their enrollment and renewal processes. New York and California had especially innovative enrollment initiatives.

However, most findings (summarized below) highlight the extreme difficulties facing children and families as states manage the program under reduced SCHIP budgets.

- 1) Texas changed its methodology for determining family income, thereby indirectly reducing its upper income limit.
- 2) Nearly 1/3rd of states changed enrollment policies, making it more difficult for families to apply.
- 3) Three states implemented enrollment freezes, placing thousands of children who would have previously been eligible onto waiting lists.
- 4) Half the states raised cost sharing amounts and/or imposed cost sharing on families who previously did not have to pay.
- 5) Nearly half the states froze or reduced reimbursement rates to providers.
- 6) Most states discontinued support for outreach services.

The report is available from the Urban Institute, at:  
[http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311015\\_A-65.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311015_A-65.pdf)

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