



The Louisiana Children's Health Insurance Program offers full health coverage at no cost to eligible children.

Call 1-877-252-2447
LaMoms
1-888-342-6207

Covering Kids and Families (CKF) is a national initiative of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, with direction provided by the Southern Institute for Children and Families. Working through broad statewide and local coalitions, this four year initiative seeks to build enduring national and regional capacity to carry on program activities beyond its funding pe-

Louisiana Covering Kids partners with statewide and local agencies to highlight the issue of the uninsured

Louisiana Covering Kids coalitions across the state partnered with many groups to host activities for Cover the Uninsured Week, March 10-16 2003. On Monday, March 10, 2003, Carrollton United – a community health network of Healthy New Orleans, hosted a town hall meeting to engage the community and elected officials in dialogue about the issue. Sandra Faulk- a parent from New Orleans- shared her story with those present at the meeting. She said that while she had LaCHIP for her son, there was nothing available for her. While health insurance was offered through her employer it was too costly for

her; and she makes too much money to qualify for Medicaid. In response to this, Secretary Hood from the Department of Health and Hospitals presented information on a plan being brought before the legislature this session, that if approved, would help parents like Sandra get health care coverage. It would also help working childless adults get some coverage through their employer.

Other officials present included John Maginnis from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana who said that the high number of uninsured only served to drive up the price of insurance for consumers who could afford it. Residents of the Carrollton

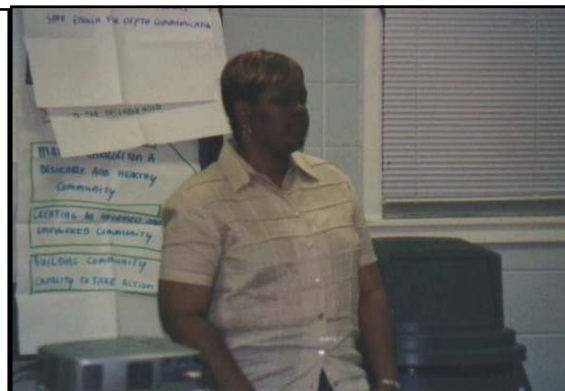
community will continue the dialogue at their next monthly meeting and will keep the officials informed about the issues they face in their community when accessing care. Deputy Director of the New Orleans Health Department, Dr. Sandra Robinson was also in attendance and told the residents that the city was willing to work with them if they came up with a plan for their community. The evening's event received media coverage on Channel 4's nightly news.

See page 2 for how Louisiana ranks with other states for reducing the number of uninsured.

Pictures from Cover the Uninsured Week– March 10-16,2003



Town hall meeting for Cover the Uninsured Week, March 10,2003.



Sandra Faulk sharing her story at the town hall meeting on March 10, 2003.

Louisiana's reduction in the number of uninsured children is ranked the best among all 50 states

Between 1999 and 2001, Louisiana reduced the number of uninsured children from 20.4 percent to 14.4 percent. This six percent reduction was the best among all 50 states. This was reported by the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid in a publication titled,

“Health Insurance Coverage in America: 2001” Secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals, David Hood said in a press release on March 14, 2003 that the report by

the Kaiser Family Foundation was a “national endorsement of our efforts.” He credited the improvement to the implementation of the Louisiana Children’s Health Insurance Program, LaCHIP.

Facts on the Uninsured

- Nearly 1 out of 3 non-elderly Americans were uninsured for all or part of 2001-2002.
- Eight out of ten of the uninsured are in working families that cannot afford health insurance and are not eligible for public programs.
- There are 8.5 million uninsured children in the United States.
- Children account for 21% of the total uninsured.

Hood continued to say that Louisiana had moved ahead of Florida, California, Nevada, Oklahoma and Arizona, and pulled almost even with Colorado and Montana, in the percent-

age of our state’s children who now have health insurance.

Since LaCHIP began in 1998, the number of uninsured children in the state has been reduced by more than 261,000. Since the data in the Kaiser report was compiled, an additional 70,000 Louisiana children have been enrolled in health coverage from the state.

DHH also has plans to work with the private sector to expand access to health coverage, so that Louisiana citizens no longer have to choose between getting the health care they need and other important daily living costs. For more information, you can email them at medweb@dhh.state.la.us.

Other News

LaMOMs: Medicaid reports that in the first months of the program’s existence a minimum of 382 pregnant women were enrolled! **Call 1-888-342-6207 for more information or to request an application.**

Healthy Kids Day statewide: Saturday, May 3, 2003: Superintendent Picard will kick off the day in Baton Rouge. It is hoped that Secretary of DHH will join the day’s events as Building Bridges team members expect to work the LaCHIP booth that day.

More businesses are getting involved with LaCHIP as Covering Kids Coalitions across the state reach out to rural grocery stores, barber shops and salons, as well as, manufacturing companies. We would like to recognize them as **Community Awareness Partners (CAP)**. In the Greater New Orleans area: Three Star Barber Shop, Innovative Hair Designs & Elevations Hair Salon. In Central Louisiana: Alexandria Beauty School, L&R Rentals, Leavine’s Grocery Store, Leebo grocery Stores and P&W One Stop. In the Northeast: Roger Manufacturing company, Richland Parish Hospital, E. Carroll Parish Hospital, Delta Bank and Terral Seed Company.

Louisiana Building Bridges Team

In March 2002, Louisiana was selected as one of five states to participate in the new *Building Bridges to Healthier Kids and Better Students* Project of the Council of Chief State School Officers and the Lucile Packard Foundation. The team members include Department of Education, the Department of Health and Hospitals, the Office of Public Health, the Louisiana School Nurses Organization, and Louisiana Covering Kids. In the year that the team has been working together we have had many successes increasing awareness of LaCHIP among schools and school employees. In December 2002, the team facilitated connecting the regional LaCHIP coordinators with the regional Special Education Coordinators in order that the bridge would be connected at the local level. Personnel from both agencies were happy to have had the opportunity to learn more about each others role in the community and how they can work together. Since

the meeting of the coordinators from each department, Medicaid coordinators have received calls to do presentations at school directors’ meetings, as well as, participate in projects like local special Olympics activities. This is not the first time that the two departments are working together on LaCHIP. Four years ago the departments developed the school lunch flier that goes home with school children every year with the free and reduced lunch application. In 2001, DHH funded a position at DOE for a LaCHIP Outreach Coordinator. The Coordinator has been working with school nurses throughout the state to increase their awareness about the program and help them help parents enroll their children in the program. Members of the Department of Education said that just having someone as a LaCHIP contact within the department has helped increase awareness and understanding of this valuable resource among staff.

Business Owners see benefits from LaCHIP

Information about the benefits of health insurance coverage, particularly LaCHIP, were not usually part of the curriculum at the Alexandria Beauty Academy. But, owners Fran Calvet and her husband, Tereal are changing the way they do business. Fran and Tereal know first hand the benefits a LaCHIP card can provide. They are raising their great grandson, Skyler, and were pleased to discover that their income, as grandparents, was not counted to determine Skyler's eligibility for the program.

Fran and Tereal have since realized that many of their customers and stu-

dents would benefit from LaCHIP as well. They make information about the program available to the customers in the salon and invite Lin Stewart, Covering Kids/LaCHIP Coordinator, for CHRISTUS/St. Frances Cabrini Hospital to come and speak to the students. According to Fran it's a win-win situation "its hard for a student to focus when they are worried about a sick child. If they are enrolled in the program and know the medical bill will be paid they are able to perform better and are more likely to complete the training. It benefits both the student and the school."

As business owners, Fran and Tereal, encourage other small business owners to take

advantage of LaCHIP and the opportunity to provide free health insurance to their employees' children who are eligible. Businesses across the state are doing just that. Large businesses, such as Wal-Mart, as well as small businesses such as Wagner's Food Stores have experienced their employees taking fewer sick days and seen improved morale since providing information about LaCHIP to their staff.

For more information on how your business can benefit from LaCHIP contact the Covering Kids regional office in your area or call 504-586-8509 x23.

Regional Coalitions Updates

Southeast Coalition: The Southeast Coalition is submitting a proposal for the Covering Kids and Families part three grant to address access issues in the area.

The grant submitted to the Annie E. Casey Foundation was awarded in March and will work with the Vietnamese community to connect them to LaCHIP/Medicaid. Next Coalition Meeting: 5/16/03

Central Coalition: The Central Coalition has partnered with the Truancy Assessment Services Center through the Juvenile Court and the School Board to make LaCHIP applications available to families. They also received recognition in the local paper during Cover the Uninsured Week, for their work in connecting families to LaCHIP. Next Coalition meeting: May 7, 2003 at 11 a.m. at the Police Jury Room in Sabine Parish.

Northeast Coalition: The coalition participated in the Ag-Expo, a regional trade show for farmers where over 250 LaCHIP applications were handed out to families.

They are also submitting a proposal for the Covering Kids and Families part three grant to address access issues. Next Coalition Meeting: May 17, 2003 at 3:30 p.m. at the United Way Building.

Louisiana Facts—

Most LaCHIP families have at least one working parent.

There are 3 main criteria for LaCHIP eligibility:

Age—the child must be under 19 years old.

Uninsured— the child must be currently uninsured.

Income— the family must have a gross income under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. For a family of 4, that's \$36,800/yr

Renewal Information

LaCHIP coverage is continuous for **twelve months**. After twelve months, the family needs to submit a 1-page "**re-certification**" form to update their information—this form is mailed to them.

Didn't get it? Call **1-877-252-2447** and ask for a "re-

Grandparents and other care givers may apply for health coverage for children.

The income of **step-parents** is not counted.

You can receive deductions from your total income for: **earned income, child care payments, child support received, or child support payments to someone outside the home.**

The application is only 1 page long and can be mailed in— **no interview needed.**

Do you need help enrolling kids in your community?

Call the Outreach Coordinator Closest to you for help in conducting effective outreach:

Louisiana Covering Kids

Statewide

Sharon Pomeroy-Bush... (504) 586-9175, ext. 23

Luanne Francis..... (504) 586-9175 ext. 22

Southeast

Stephanie V. Frisco (504) 586-9171 ext. 20

Central

Lin Stewart... (318) 561- 4147

Northeast:

Lynda Gavioli ... (318) 325-3869

Donna Winters... (318) 325-3869

Medicaid Outreach Coordinators

Statewide: Kyle Viator... (225) 342-6043

Monroe: Geniece Percy... (318) 368-3166

Lafayette: Carol Stephens... (337) 262-5228

New Orleans: Michelle Ross... (504) 365-6155

Mandeville: Linda Thomas... (985) 871-1275

Alexandria: Chester Coco.. (318) 253-5946

Lake Charles: Susan Ledger... (337) 491-2169

Shreveport: Betty Stanley... (318) 862-9906

Baton Rouge: Doretha Davis ... (225) 922-1685

Thibodaux: Theresa Fussell(985) 449-5152

We're on the web! www.lacoveringkids.com

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