



# LOUISIANA

Summer 2004

# covering kids™

# & families

This newsletter is supported through a generous grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. ([www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org))

## LaCHIP enrollment reaches 100,000!!!

Medicaid reports that the number of children enrolled in the Louisiana Children's Health Insurance Program, LaCHIP, has now exceeded 100,000 and continues to



climb. Over 8,000 have been enrolled since Governor Blanco's pledge to enroll all eligible children earlier this spring. Current totals indicate that over 631,000 children have coverage through our state

programs. However, it is estimated that 75,000 children remain uninsured yet eligible. Louisiana is one of the few states that has not curtailed benefits to recipients nor imposed enrollment caps. Other states face

severe cutbacks to their health coverage programs for children, while we continue to simplify the enrollment and renewal processes. Louisiana continues to be a model for other states' reform efforts!

### COLLABORATIONS ARE THE KEY!

State agencies working together **STRENGTHEN** the links needed to reach families who can benefit from the health care coverage programs for children and pregnant women. Here's some of what's happening!

The **Department of Social Services (DSS)** new Assistant Secretary, Adren Wilson, spoke at a recent Medicaid Outreach Team meeting about his agency's commitment to 'bring down the old silos' that kept the agencies isolated from one another. He promised to explore new collaborative efforts with the DHH such as providing LaCHIP/Medicaid information to families receiving child care assistance.

The **LA Department of Education (DOE)** has begun an ambitious plan, in partnership with DHH, to improve health outcomes for public school children through a new project called Louisiana's Coordinated School Health Program. DOE will focus on prevention and intervention through education and DHH will focus on providing access to physical and mental health services and insurance coverage!

# NEWS ★ YOU ★ CAN ★ USE

**Parish level data on the number of uninsured children now exists!** Look on the new LaCHIP website for links to the LSU/DHH survey of 10,000 households in Louisiana with estimates of uninsured children under age 19 for each parish in the state.

## **New WEBSITE for LaCHIP!!!**

The Department of Health & Hospitals has a great new website that is full of resources such as downloadable enrollment and renewal applications, links to providers, materials for outreach, data, reports, contacts and more!  
Take a look, go to....

[www.lachip.org](http://www.lachip.org)

**Strategic Enrollment Unit at Medicaid:** A new team of experienced staff has been formed to address special issues of enrolling and renewing families in all regions of the state. Contacts are Doretha Davis at (225) 342-1163 or Johnnie Fitzgerald at (225) 342-1161

## UPDATES from the Field

### **Cover the Uninsured Week' May 10-16:**

CKF Coalition members participated in events statewide as part of a national campaign to raise awareness of the plight of the uninsured. Press events took place in New Orleans and Alexandria. Some speakers included DHH Secretary Dr. Cerise and Medicaid Deputy Director Ruth Kennedy, Rep. Monica Walker and personal stories.

### **INTENSE OUTREACH in Northwest:**

CKF Coordinator, Lin Stewart, accompanied Medicaid LaCHIP Coordinator, Betty Stanley

and other outreach workers on trips throughout the northwestern region of Louisiana to help spread the word about LaCHIP. This area has a high number of uninsured, yet potentially eligible children. Much effort is being focused on getting them enrolled. The outreach team distributed over 47,000 applications in the first five months of 2004, and spoke with hundreds of community leaders. A special DHH conference in Shreveport on June 29 is planned to get the community involved in enrolling all eligible children.

### **Medicaid & Department of Labor (DOL) RAPID RESPONSE TEAMS**

Medicaid Outreach Specialists have teamed up with DOL staff to reach families impacted by job loss when a company moves, closes or downsizes. The closing of State Farm Insurance in Monroe earlier this spring left some 1,200 employees displaced from work and the Rapid Response teams were there to provide vital program information to families losing their jobs and related benefits.

### **ALL STATES ALERT: National SCHIP Crisis**

#### **Featured state: Mississippi**

Our close neighbor is facing severe cuts in its Medicaid program, some health advocacy groups say the deepest in US history! Ironically Mississippi had previously been one of the most generous for recipients. Program expansions created during the economic boom of the 1990's are no longer sustainable as costs have more than doubled over the last five years. The ailing state budget cannot support the \$4 billion federal/state program, of which Mississippi pays about \$1 billion.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS in CKF Coalition Regions:**

including 'Back-to-School' activities, coalition meetings, etc.. some events are still TBA, stay tuned via [www.lacoveringkids.org](http://www.lacoveringkids.org) or [www.lachip.org](http://www.lachip.org)

### **Northwest- Contact: Lin Stewart (318) 561-4147**

- ⇒ **June 29:** DHH Northwest Louisiana LaCHIP Conference - open to the public, Willis Knighton Pierremont Hospital, 8001 Youree Drive, Shreveport, 9-4pm
- ⇒ **August 14:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day', Pierre Bossier Mall, Bossier City 9-3pm
- ⇒ **August/TBA:** 'Back-to-School' Family Fun Day & Health Fair
- ⇒ **September/TBA:** Caddo/Bossier CKF Coalition meeting

### **Northeast- Contact: Donna Winters (318) 323-8775**

- ⇒ **August 14:** Start School Right! Children's Resources & Health Fair, Monroe Civic Center

### **Central- Contact: Lin Stewart (318) 561-4147**

- ⇒ **August 1-4:** Calvary Baptist Church Annual 'Back-to-School' event, Alexandria
- ⇒ **August 3:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day' at Fred's Discount, Pineville 9-2pm
- ⇒ **August 4:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day' at Kmart, Pineville 9-2pm
- ⇒ **August 5:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day' at Super One Foods, Alexandria 9-2pm
- ⇒ **August 7:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day' at Wal-Mart Super Center, Marksville 9-3pm
- ⇒ **August 7:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day' at Wal-Mart Super Center, Leesville 9-3pm
- ⇒ **August 7:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day' at Wal-Mart, Faraday 9-3pm
- ⇒ **August 14:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day' at Alexandria Mall 5-8pm

### **Southwest- Contact: Lin Stewart (318) 561-4147**

- ⇒ **August 14:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day' at Wal-Mart Super Center, Lake Charles
- ⇒ **August 14:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day' at Wal-Mart, Jennings

### **South-Central (Acadiana)- Contact: Lin Stewart (318) 561-4147**

- ⇒ **July 21:** CKF coalition meeting at the Clifton Chenier Auditorium in Lafayette, 2-4pm
- ⇒ **August TBA:** 'Back-to-School' enrollment events are being planned. Visit websites soon.

### **Southeast- Contact: Pastor Torin Sanders (504) 512-0150**

- ⇒ **June 30:** CommunityCARE training/update for Children's Coalition for the Bayou Region meeting, 12-1:30pm, First Methodist Church in Houma
- ⇒ **July 8:** CKF Southeast Coalition meeting at the United Way in New Orleans, 10-11:30am
- ⇒ **July 17:** Houma Kids Day at the Houma-Terrebonne Civic Center 11-5pm
- ⇒ **August 7:** 2nd Annual Kids Fitness & Fun Day, Denham Springs 10-2pm
- ⇒ **August 7:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day' at Wal-Mart (Perkins Rd) Baton Rouge, 9-5pm
- ⇒ **August 8:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day', LA School for the Deaf, Baton Rouge, 12-4pm
- ⇒ **August 13:** Excelth Health & Enrollment Fair at Excelth Clinic in New Orleans East 9-2pm
- ⇒ **August 14:** 'Back-to-School Bash' at the Outreach Center in Southland Mall in Houma
- ⇒ **August 14:** 'Back-to-School Enrollment Day', Super Wal-Mart in Slidell, Northshore Blvd

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The annual '**Back-to-School**' campaign is coming this August. To be a part of events in your community contact your local CKF or Medicaid Coordinator.

**Louisiana Covering Kids & Families**  
**Agenda for Children**  
**1720 St. Charles Ave**  
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**Contact information for  
Louisiana Covering Kids & Families and Regional Medicaid Outreach Staff**

**Louisiana Covering Kids & Families**

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

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**Louisiana Covering Kids & Families (CKF)** at Agenda for Children is part of a national effort sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to increase the number of people who benefit from state/federal health care coverage programs, thus reducing the number of uninsured. The project supports a statewide and 6 regional coalitions working to ensure that all eligible people get enrolled and maintain their coverage.