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covering kids & families

Wisconsin

Connecting kids to health care coverage

Partner Agencies

ABC for Health
Community Advocates, Inc
La Crosse County Health Dept
Marshfield Clinic
Milwaukee Health Dept

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WI MAINTAINS LOW RATE OF UNINSURANCE FOR CHILDREN

BadgerCare fills the gap as fewer children receive private coverage

*Back-to-school campaign urges parents to call 1-800-722-2295
to find out if their uninsured children are eligible*

Statewide Coalition Members

ABC for Rural Health
Advance Health Care Consulting LLC
Agnesian Health Care
Aurora Health Care
Automated Health Systems
Children's Health Alliance of WI
Clark County Dept of Social Service
Covenant Healthcare System
Dane County Dept of Human Services
Dane County Parent Council, Inc.
Dean Health System
Dodge County Area Volunteers In Action
Economic Justice Institute, Inc
Family Health Center of Marshfield, Inc
Family Planning Health Services, Inc
Family Resource Connection
Fox Cities Community Clinic
High Expectations
La Causa, Inc
Legal Action of Wisconsin
Madison Dept of Public Health
Managed Health Services
March of Dimes – Wisconsin Chapter
Medical College of Wisconsin
Milwaukee Public Schools
Network Health Plan
Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative
Scenic Bluffs Community Health Centers
Security Health Plan
Southwestern WI Community Action Program
United Way of Dane County
Unity Health Insurance
UW Extension – Marathon County
UW Extension – Wood County
UW Madison, Dept of Pediatrics
WI Dept of Health & Family Services
WI Dept of Public Instruction
Wisconsin Assoc. for Perinatal Care
Wisconsin Assoc. of Family & Children's Agencies
Wisconsin Citizen Action
Wisconsin Council on Children and Families
Wisconsin Hospital Association
Wisconsin Office of Rural Health
Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association
Wisconsin Public Health & Health Policy Institute
Wisconsin WIC Program
Wood County Dept of Social Services

Milwaukee, WI – Even though the total number of Americans without health insurance is on the rise, a new study analyzing government data suggests that the number of uninsured kids is on the decline. While Wisconsin was one of just six states to show a slight increase in the percent of uninsured children, public health care programs such as *BadgerCare* helped Wisconsin continue to have one of the lowest rates of uninsured children in the country.

“The State of Kids’ Coverage” was released today by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) at an event to kick off the *Covering Kids & Families* Back-to-School Campaign, a nationwide effort with intensive focus in Milwaukee to enroll eligible children in Medicaid and SCHIP during the back-to-school season.

The study shows that in Wisconsin, the percentage of children who have private health care coverage has decreased by nearly 15 percent since 1997-98, meaning 139,000 fewer kids have private coverage. During the same period, the number of kids enrolled in public health programs such as *BadgerCare* has increased by more than 75 percent, covering more than 154,000 more kids and providing an important safety net for families.

“Healthy Start, Medicaid and *BadgerCare* have provided a much-needed safety net for Wisconsin’s children,” said Michael Jacob, project coordinator for *Covering Kids & Families* – Wisconsin. “Because of these programs, working parents don’t have to choose between filling the refrigerator and filling a prescription.”

“We know that children who have health insurance are better prepared to learn in school and better equipped to succeed in life,” said First Lady Jessica Doyle. “The back-to-school season is an ideal time to make sure that children have the health coverage they need.”

The latest Census data shows that of the 8.3 million children who remain uninsured nationwide, more than 85,000 live in Wisconsin. Most of these children are eligible for low-cost or free health care coverage through Medicaid or *BadgerCare*, but have not yet enrolled. Wisconsin families of four earning up to \$37,000 a year or more may qualify, and parents can call toll-free **1-800-722-2295** to find out if their children are eligible.

- more -

Lead Agency

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The *Covering Kids & Families* Back-to-School campaign will reach thousands of Wisconsin families during August and September by:

- Placing TV ads in the Milwaukee area to reach eligible families;
- Securing air time for public service announcements in Madison and La Crosse;
- Hosting two major health fairs in Milwaukee, August 18 and 19;
- Distributing more than 40,000 outreach materials to potentially eligible families at several dozen outreach events across the state;
- Working with coalition partners to promote the **1-800-722-2295** toll-free number statewide.

Covering Kids & Families - Wisconsin is a statewide coalition of more than 65 organizations dedicated to reducing the number of uninsured children and families by making sure they know about and get enrolled in the public health programs for which they are eligible.

Today's report was prepared by analysts at the State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC), located at the University of Minnesota. The report analyzes data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics 2003 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) and the U.S. Census Bureau's 1998, 1999, 2004, and 2005 Current Population Surveys (CPS).

To view the research report, locate *Covering Kids & Families* activities, or download materials in English or Spanish, log on to www.coveringkidsandfamilies.org.

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Fast Facts:

There are more than 85,000 uninsured kids in Wisconsin, and most are eligible for low-cost or free health care coverage through Medicaid or *BadgerCare*.

Children in a family of four earning up to \$37,000 a year or more may qualify.
Eligibility is based on family size and income.

Parents should call the Maternal and Child Health hotline toll-free at **1-800-722-2295** to find out if their children are eligible.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 30 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.

The University of Minnesota's State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC) helps states monitor rates of health insurance coverage and to understand factors associated with uninsurance. SHADAC provides targeted policy analysis and technical assistance to states that are conducting their own health insurance surveys and/or using data from national surveys. Information can be located at www.shadac.umn.edu.