



NEWS

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Florida KidCare Partners and State Leaders Announce Sixth Year of Growth in Number of Enrolled Children

TALLAHASSEE – Florida KidCare partners and state leaders today announced at a press conference that for the sixth consecutive year, the number of Florida children receiving health insurance coverage through the [Florida KidCare](#) program has increased.

The momentous achievement, which means some 62,500 more children are enrolled than were one year ago, brings the total amount of children receiving high-quality, affordable health and dental coverage through Florida KidCare to 2.1 million. In July 2007, the total number of children covered under the Florida KidCare umbrella was less than 1.4 million.

“We stood together a year ago and pledged to increase the number of children covered by this wonderful program,” said Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Jeff Atwater, a long-time Florida KidCare advocate who by law is designated as Chair of the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation’s Board of Directors. “Today, we are pleased to say that these collective efforts have paid off in an impactful way. As a result, millions of Florida kids are enjoying safer childhoods and healthier futures.”

CFO Atwater was joined by Secretary Elizabeth Dudek of the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), State Surgeon General Dr. John Armstrong of the Florida Department of Health (DOH), Deputy Secretary Suzanne Vitale of the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and other Florida KidCare partner agencies to reiterate the importance of health insurance for Florida’s families. The most recent year-to-year enrollment gains have had a meaningful impact in the number of uninsured Florida children, currently estimated to be near 475,000.

“This milestone in enrollment numbers tells us that our Florida families are embracing what Florida KidCare has to offer,” said Secretary Liz Dudek of the Agency for Health Care Administration. “However, as advocates of Florida KidCare, we must recommit ourselves to helping decrease the number of children in our state who still aren’t covered with health insurance.”

Since it began in 1998, Florida KidCare has provided families access to high-quality doctors and preventive care for their children at an affordable cost. Through Florida KidCare, children have access to comprehensive health care benefits including doctor visits, check-ups, immunizations, hospital visits, surgeries, prescriptions, emergencies, dental, vision and hearing screenings, mental health and much more! “Florida KidCare is one of the most effective tools available to ensure kids have the coverage they need to supplement a lifestyle of physical activity and healthy eating,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary for Health Dr. John Armstrong.

According to the most recent data from the Center for Children and Families at Georgetown University, Florida is one of the three states that lead the nation in reducing the number of uninsured children, down from 16.7 percent to 11.9 percent in the past three years. Officials say this reduction is particularly impressive given population growth during that period, and they credit Florida KidCare with playing an integral role in getting children covered.

“Florida KidCare helps take stress off of families by making it easy and affordable for parents to get health insurance for their children,” said Interim Secretary Esther Jacobo of the Florida Department of Children and Families. “With choices that can work with any family budget, Florida KidCare puts high-quality health and dental coverage within the reach of every child.”

Most families pay premiums as low as \$15 or \$20 a month for the comprehensive health coverage and many pay nothing at all. Florida KidCare also offers full-pay options for those who are not eligible for subsidized coverage.

“Our goal is to make sure parents understand the value of health insurance and the priceless peace of mind that comes with Florida KidCare,” said Rich Robleto, Executive Director of the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation. “With Florida KidCare coverage, parents can let kids get back to being kids.”

For more information on Florida KidCare, visit www.floridakidcare.org.

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