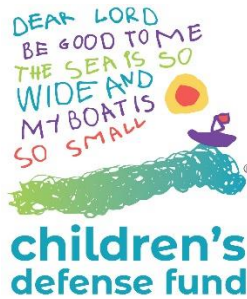


American Academy  
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



FAMILY VOICES®

FIRST FOCUS  
ON CHILDREN



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**Leading Children's Health Groups Urge Lawmakers and Administration to Address  
Troubling Trends in Children's Uninsurance**

**Washington, DC** – Leading children's health groups are urging comprehensive and immediate action by Congress and the Administration to protect and improve access to health care coverage for all children. The call to action comes on the heels of recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau showing that 320,000 fewer children had health insurance coverage in 2019 than in 2018, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, a new [report](#) from the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families shows that in 2019, an estimated 4.4 million children did not have health coverage, an increase of 726,000 or nearly 20 percent more children without insurance since 2016, when the nation reached a historic low in children without coverage. The child uninsured rate has grown from 4.7 to 5.7 percent over the same period.

The American Academy of Pediatrics, Children's Defense Fund, Family Voices, First Focus on Children, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, March of Dimes, and the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners issue the following statement:

"Our organizations are sounding the alarm over the growing number of children without health insurance. Recent data show the largest increase in the number of uninsured children in more than a decade. A new report today shows that years of progress in covering more children has been eroded, with widespread coverage losses across income, age, and racial and ethnic groups.

"Since 2016, the number of uninsured children has grown each year. Especially concerning is that these 2019 numbers do not reflect the devastating consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic downturn this year, which has caused millions of families to lose jobs and employer-sponsored insurance. These data underscore that the children's health coverage landscape was already headed in a dangerous direction, even before the pandemic hit.

"Without health care coverage, children's health suffers. Often, no coverage means no care, which means fewer preventive screenings to catch conditions before they become severe and costly. It means no access to affordable dental coverage, vaccines, or prenatal services for pregnant mothers. While the latest data show that children across all regions and income levels experienced coverage losses in 2019, the greatest coverage losses were among Hispanic children. The COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a disproportionate impact on communities of color, only exacerbates the impact on children and families who lack access to affordable, comprehensive and high-quality health coverage. We know that children without health coverage could also suffer long-term harm, ending up in poorer health, with less educational attainment and less financial security in adulthood.

"Before the pandemic, the Administration's actions—such as the public charge rule, which has reduced immigrant families' willingness to enroll their children in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and other problematic policy changes that impeded access to Medicaid, CHIP and private insurance—are contributors to this erosion of children's coverage. The ongoing global pandemic and subsequent economic recession lead us to believe coverage losses for children will only continue to get worse.

"Children need health care coverage that they can rely on. Congress took the first step to protect children and families by providing greater financial support for Medicaid in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, along with its continuous coverage protections ensuring that children, pregnant women, and families won't lose Medicaid coverage due to red tape during the pandemic. We call on Congress and the Administration to advance policies that ensure all children and families have health care coverage, not policies that stand in the way of making that possible. Our children's futures depend on our ability to act now."

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#### **About the American Academy of Pediatrics**

*The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 67,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults. For more information, visit [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org).*

#### **About the Children's Defense Fund**

*The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit child advocacy organization that has worked relentlessly for more than 40 years to ensure a level playing field for all children. The Children's Defense Fund Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. We champion [policies](#) and [programs](#) that lift children out of poverty; protect them from abuse and neglect; and ensure their access to health care, quality education and a moral and spiritual foundation. CDF advocates nationwide on behalf of children to ensure children are always a priority.*

#### **About Family Voices**

*Family Voices is a national family-led organization of families and friends of children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) and disabilities. We connect a network of family-led organizations in every state, 5 territories and 3 serving tribal groups that provide support to families of CYSHCN. We promote partnership with families at all levels of health care in order to improve health care services and policies for children.*

#### **About First Focus on Children**

*First Focus on Children is a bipartisan advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families the priority in federal policy and budget decisions.*

**About the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families**

*The Georgetown University Center for Children and Families is an independent, nonpartisan policy and research center founded in 2005 with a mission to expand and improve high-quality, affordable coverage for America's children and families. CCF is based at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy in Washington, D.C.*

**About March of Dimes**

*March of Dimes leads the fight for the health of all moms and babies. We support research, lead programs and provide education and advocacy so that every baby can have the best possible start. Building on a successful 80-year legacy of impact and innovation, we empower every mom and every family.*

*Visit [marchofdimes.org](http://marchofdimes.org) or [nacersano.org](http://nacersano.org) for more information. Visit [shareyourstory.org](http://shareyourstory.org) for comfort and support. Find us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).*

**About the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners**

*The National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP) is the nation's only professional association for pediatric nurse practitioners (PNPs) and their fellow pediatric-focused advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) who are dedicated to improving the quality of health care for infants, children, adolescents and young adults. Representing more than 9,000 healthcare practitioners with 19 special interest groups and 50 chapters, NAPNAP has been advocating for children's health since 1973 and was the first NP society in the U.S. Our mission is to empower pediatric-focused PNP and their interprofessional partners to enhance child and family health through leadership, advocacy, professional practice, education and research.*