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American Academy
of Pediatrics



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Leading Children's Health and Medical Groups Urge Action Following Increase in Number of Uninsured Children

Washington, DC—Leading children's health and medical organizations are urging comprehensive and immediate action by Congress and the Administration following new data released today by the U.S. Census Bureau showing 425,000 fewer children had health insurance coverage in 2018.

In response to these numbers, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Children's Defense Fund, Children's Dental Health Project, Family Voices, First Focus on Children, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, March of Dimes and the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners issued the following statement:

“Today's report shows that in 2018, 4.3 million children in the United States were uninsured – an increase of 425,000 uninsured children in a single year. This is an urgent call to action for Congress and the Administration. The data is especially alarming considering the relatively healthy economy and low unemployment rate, which counters claims that children are leaving public coverage to instead be covered by private insurance. When the number of children enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP fell by over 800,000 nationwide in 2018, we feared it foreshadowed a sizeable drop in coverage, and today, our fears were confirmed. This decline in public and private coverage harms children's health.

“Nearly one-third of America's children rely on Medicaid and CHIP for comprehensive, affordable medical and dental coverage, including children in foster care, children who live in or near poverty, and children with disabilities or special health care needs. For these kids, no coverage often means no care. No care means fewer preventive screenings to catch conditions before they become severe and costly. No care means more missed school and work days for parents. It means no access to affordable dental coverage, or prenatal services for pregnant mothers. We can do better, and we must.

“Make no mistake: the Administration’s actions—such as harmful policies that discourage immigrant families from enrolling in Medicaid and CHIP and adding more red-tape to Medicaid—have contributed to this erosion of children’s coverage. There are signs that coverage losses for children will continue to get worse.

“We call on Congress and the Administration to protect and improve health coverage for all children so that we can renew the bipartisan efforts that led to the historically low number of uninsured children in recent years. Using our [principles](#) as a guide, Congress and the Administration should take action to make it easier and more affordable for children and families to enroll—and stay enrolled—in coverage that meets their needs. This is a problem we must solve before it becomes a crisis.”

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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 aap.org and follow us on Twitter @AmerAcadPeds.

About the Children’s Defense Fund

The Children’s Defense Fund (CDF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit child advocacy organization that has worked relentlessly for more than 40 years to ensure a level playing field for all children. We provide a strong, effective and independent voice for all the children of America who cannot vote, lobby or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor children, children of color and those with disabilities. CDF educates the nation about the needs of children and encourages preventive investments before they get sick, drop out of school, get into trouble or suffer family breakdown.

About the Children’s Dental Health Project

The Children’s Dental Health Project (CDHP) is a Washington, DC-based policy organization that advances solutions so that, one day, no child will suffer from tooth decay. We believe no family should be held back from its dreams due to dental disease. Learn more at www.cdhp.org, on Twitter at @Teeth_Matter or Facebook at @childrensdentalhealth

About Family Voices

[Family Voices](#) is a national, nonprofit, family-led organization promoting quality health care for all children and youth, particularly those with special health care needs. Working with family leaders and professional partners at the local, state, regional, and national levels since 1992, Family Voices has brought a respected family perspective to improving health care programs and policies and ensuring that health care systems include, listen to, and honor the voices of families.

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. First Focus on Children leads a comprehensive advocacy strategy, with its hands-on experience with federal policymaking and a commitment to seeking policy solutions.

About the Georgetown University Center for Children & Families

The Georgetown University Center for Children & Families (CCF), part of the Health Policy Institute at the McCourt School of Public Policy, is an independent, nonpartisan policy and research center with a mission to expand and improve high-quality, affordable health coverage.

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 or nacersano.org for more information. Visit 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.