

# Children's Champion

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As the weather (finally) cools off and children across the state settle into their school routine, our team at TJC has been thinking about the intersection of children's health and success in school. It seems obvious: healthy kids are better learners. Consistent and affordable access to healthcare helps reduce health-related absenteeism and contributes to future educational and economic success.

But how can we make sure that kids are insured, particularly when school-age children are more likely to be uninsured than younger children? One tactic to increase the rate of insured school-age children is making sure parents have access to healthcare.

When parents  
get the care  
they need,  
kids are  
healthier  
too.



**The rate of uninsured school-age children remains nearly twice as high in states that haven't expanded Medicaid.** Parents are better

equipped to support their children's learning and engage more in school activities when they're getting the care they need to stay healthy. Let's work together to get more families covered, putting parents and their kids on the path to success.

## QUICK LINKS

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## INSURE OUR KIDS UPDATES

# INSURE OUR KIDS ENROLLMENT TRAINING



THURSDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 13  
11 AM CST



**Don't miss our Insure Our Kids training today at 11 am CT!**

The webinar will cover coverage options, eligibility, and the enrollment process. Insure Our Kids is a statewide campaign to enroll every uninsured child who is eligible for health insurance. Together we can raise public awareness of TennCare and CoverKids and connect families to enrollment assistance. We gladly welcome any information that you have about barriers that make it more challenging to enroll uninsured children.

**[REGISTER HERE FOR TODAY'S WEBINAR](#)**

Our October Insure Our Kids training will be at 3 pm CT to accommodate more attendees.

**[REGISTER HERE FOR OCTOBER'S WEBINAR](#)**

Please "like" and "follow" the Insure Our Kids [Facebook page](#).

If you need help applying for  
TennCare and CoverKids, call  
**1-844-644-5443.**

If you have already applied and  
been denied, call the Tennessee  
Justice Center at  
**1-877-608-1009**  
to get free help to file an appeal.



Don't forget to check out [insureourkids.org](http://insureourkids.org) for more information.

## ICYMI



- **Student Ambassador Program:** We are now accepting applications for our 2018-2019 class of Student Ambassadors! Ambassadors will develop their knowledge about healthcare issues and learn valuable leadership and advocacy skills. Student Ambassadors are passionate, young leaders who have the power to change their community and even the world. [Apply here!](#) **The application deadline is September 21.**
  - If you'd like to share information about our Student Ambassador Program, please share [this flyer](#).
  - To learn more about the program, here is a [video](#) of last year's Student Ambassadors and a [guest blog post](#) written by Dennisse Calle and Kinika Young for the Georgetown Center for Children and Families.
- **ECF CHOICES:** We have a new [ECF CHOICES fact sheet](#) and [blog post](#) for anyone who would like to learn more or share information about the program. Many individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) are seeking ways to achieve independence. In Tennessee, these individuals may be able to receive services to support this goal through TennCare's Employment and Community First (EFC) CHOICES program. This program provides home and community-based services (HCBS) for people who don't want to live at an institution and who choose to live

independently of their families. This program also supports families who live with and care for a family member with I/DD.

- **Katie Beckett Waiver:** Why is Tennessee still short-changing children with special healthcare needs? Read our [fact sheet](#) and [blog post](#) about the Katie Beckett Waiver to find out.
- **Public charge:** We are still anticipating a proposed rule change that would harm immigrant children and families. Under the draft proposal, if children or other relatives receive Medicaid, nutrition benefits, or other aid for which they are eligible, their parents may be denied green cards. This policy threatens to divide families by forcing parents to choose between getting health coverage for their children or maintaining their ability to remain with their children in the U.S. Fear and confusion will prompt many more families to drop health coverage or forego needed nutrition assistance for which they remain eligible. Suppressed enrollment would directly impact how much funding Tennessee gets for a host of other social services and programs that many Tennesseans - immigrant and non-immigrant alike - rely on.
  - Stay up-to-date on the status of the public charge rule change by [signing up for this email list](#). We have partnered with TIRRC to send out updates and action alerts.
  - Prepare to submit comments when the rule is released. There will be a 60-day comment period. Individuals and organizations are encouraged to submit comments. We can provide research and assistance for your organization.

## THE MORE YOU KNOW

### Back-To-School



The Georgetown Center for Children and Families just released their [K-12 report](#). The conclusion of the report states:

"Over the last decade, Medicaid, CHIP, and the ACA contributed to gains in insurance coverage for school-age children. Between 2009 and 2016, the rate of uninsured school-age children was cut in half and the rate of school-age children covered through Medicaid/CHIP increased by about 30 percent. **States that adopted the ACA's Medicaid expansion had a lower rate of uninsured school-age children and a higher rate of school-age children covered through Medicaid/CHIP in 2016.**

"School-age children across all income and race and ethnicity groups experienced declines in their uninsured rates, but disparities persist. However, Medicaid's role maintaining coverage gains, filling gaps, and supporting long-term educational outcomes for children depends on the strong engagement of health and education policy leaders. National, state and school level leaders can work together to keep public coverage strong, ensure children are enrolled in Medicaid/CHIP, and prioritize coverage outreach efforts where geographic, racial and ethnic, and income gaps persist."

## LOOKING FORWARD



### Federal level:

- Texas v. United States is a current case brought by a group of Republican attorney generals (including Tennessee's AG) and governors who are arguing that the ACA should be ruled unconstitutional. Arguments were heard in the Texas Federal District Court on Sept. 5. We are of course worried about what this could mean for the incredibly important consumer protections brought by the ACA, like pre-existing conditions protections and the broader impact on the whole healthcare industry.
  - [Here](#) is an in-depth analysis of the legal arguments in the case and potential repercussions.

### State level:

- Tennessee has received a State Flexibility Grant of \$283,060.64 from CMS for "Essential Health Benefits". The intention of the grant program is to encourage "flexibility" in the insurance market. [Analysis](#) shows that weakening Essential Health Benefits (which the administration seems likely

to encourage in the name of state flexibility) could bring us back to the days before the Affordable Care Act when health insurance plans commonly didn't cover prenatal care, delivery services, or well-baby care. Reducing benefit packages or undermining requirements would jeopardize the progress we've made in strengthening consumer protections since the passage of the ACA.

## JOIN US



### What will you do during Child Health Week? #TNchildhealthweek2018

TO FIND ACTIVITIES IN YOUR AREA, VIEW THE CALENDAR AT  
<https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/mch/child-health-week-2018/chw-events-calendar.html>



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As a reminder, the Tennessee Justice Center also helps with:

1. Enrollment onto TennCare and CoverKids
2. Service Issues
3. Redetermination Issues

If you ever encounter anyone who is having trouble getting health insurance or getting health services, please call TJC: (615) 255-0331.

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If there is any information you would like us to share on your behalf, including events and resources, please reply to this email.

**Sincerely,**

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**STAY CONNECTED:**



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