

Children's Champion

December 10, 2018 • Vol. 25 • Tennessee Justice Center

Today is the last day to [submit comments](#) against the proposed changes to public charge that would radically affect immigrant families across the country.

[SUBMIT YOUR COMMENT TODAY!](#)

The proposed rule would create an income test that will make it harder for most immigrant families to stay or be reunited in America. Under the draft proposal, if someone receives Medicaid, nutrition benefits, or other aid for which they are eligible, they may be denied green cards or a change of immigration status. Children perform better in school, have fewer health problems and brighter futures when they have access to nutrition and health care services.

For guidance on how to draft a comment, we have created [a comment guidance resource with template comments](#). If you would like us to review your comment before submission, please email it to Anna Walton at awalton@tnjustice.org.

Please let us know if you or your organization submitted a comment.

QUICK LINKS

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INSURE OUR KIDS UPDATES

Insure Our Kids has a new phone number!

Pregnant women and children seeking help with enrollment or information about TennCare and CoverKids should call **1-844-478-KIDS (5437)**.

Our resources have been updated accordingly. **Please share the updated Insure Our Kids video and enrollment graphic!** (Also available on insureourkids.org.)

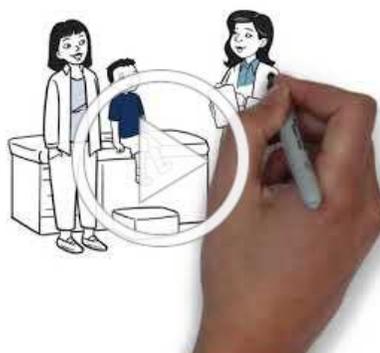


- Hospital visits

Your children may be eligible for free or low-cost health insurance.



[Insure Our Kids video for parents](#)



[Insure Our Kids video for providers](#)

If you need help applying for
TennCare and CoverKids, call
1-844-478-KIDS (5437).

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.



The new phone line is staffed by Julia Dixon, TJC's new King Child Health Fellow. Julia is a 2016 graduate of Yale University who previously taught Pre-K in Tulsa, Oklahoma as a Teach for America corps member. We're excited to have Julia join TJC's Children's Health Team!

There is one last opportunity to attend the **Insure Our Kids enrollment and eligibility webinar on Thursday, December 13 3 pm - 4 pm CT.**

[Register here!](#)

INSURE OUR KIDS ENROLLMENT TRAINING



THURSDAY,
DECEMBER 13
3 PM CT



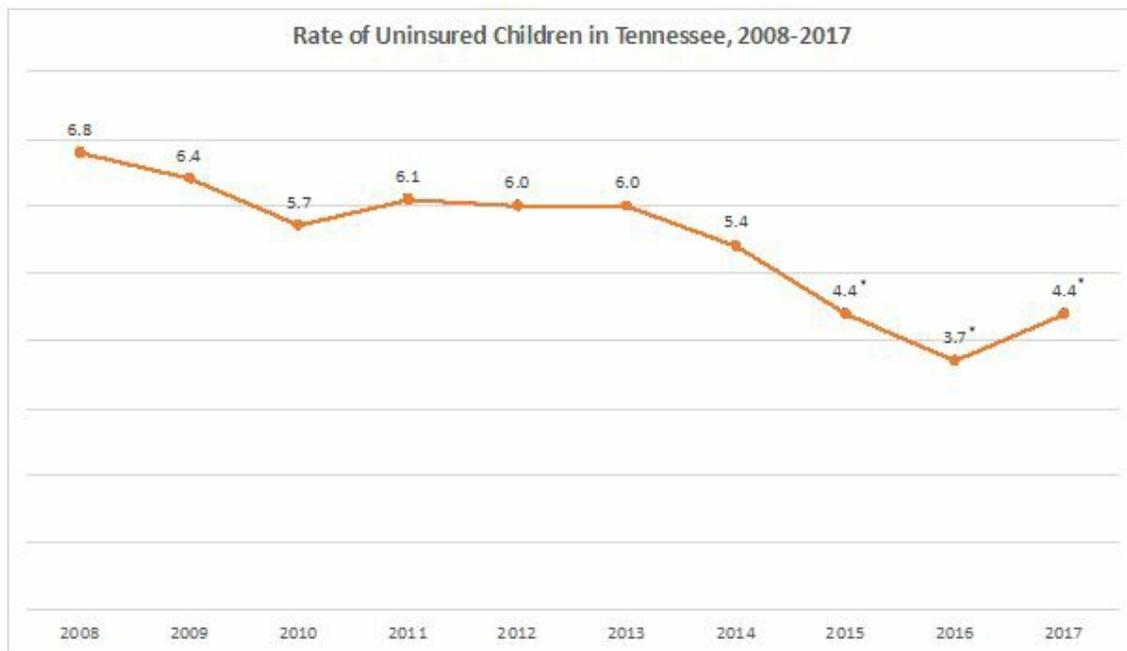
ICYMI

- **Katie Beckett Waiver**
 - You may remember that we wrote in depth about the need for a Katie Beckett waiver or similar program in [November's Children's Champion](#). Since then, two more articles about families that would benefit from such a program have been published.
 - [Caring for children with severe disabilities financially devastates Tennessee families](#) - Tennessean
 - [Lawmakers may address TennCare disability support for 'most vulnerable citizens in the state'](#) - Tennessean
- **Fostering Youth Transitions**

- The Annie E. Casey Foundation released "[Fostering Youth Transitions: Using Data to Drive Policy and Practice Decisions](#)," a brief report including data from all 50 states. In October, TCCY released the "[Youth Transitions Advisory Council Annual Report](#)," detailing Tennessee's efforts to assure youth released from state custody without supportive families or caregivers succeed. It also recommended strategies to improve their opportunity for success.
 - We wanted to share the Tennessee profile [fact sheet](#) from the AECF report and emphasize that former foster children up to the age of 26 can qualify for TennCare.

THE MORE YOU KNOW

Increased Number of Uninsured Children



Tennessee saw one of the nation's greatest increases in the kids' uninsured rate, 71,000 or 4.4 percent of children were uninsured in 2017, according to a [new report](#) released by the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families. That's 13,000 more children than in 2016.

The number of uninsured children nationwide increased by about 276,000 children last year, the first significant increase in a decade. An estimated 3.9 million children were uninsured nationwide in 2017.

Three-quarters of the children who lost coverage between 2016 and 2017 live in states that have not expanded Medicaid. Tennessee is among the states that has not expanded Medicaid.

"Tennessee's choice not to expand Medicaid leaves our children and families behind. Medicaid expansion helps to get health insurance to more parents who had no coverage options before, and we know when parents have health coverage kids are more likely to do as well. This helps kids get and stay healthy, so they can enter school ready to learn and succeed in life. Another choice leading to tens of thousands of children losing coverage just in the past year is Tennessee's decision to forge ahead with redeterminations without a functioning computer system. The

state has failed to take any steps to protect children from getting caught up in this red tape" said Kinika Young, Director of Children's Health at the Tennessee Justice Center.

"This increase in the child uninsured rate, particularly in states that did not expand Medicaid, is a warning sign to policymakers," said Joan Alker, executive director of the Georgetown University research center and lead author of the report. "Barring new and serious efforts to get back on track, there is every reason to believe the decline in children's coverage is likely to continue and may get worse."

This is the eighth annual report on uninsured children published by the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, 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. The Georgetown University Center for Children and Families is based at the McCourt School of Public Policy.

LOOKING FORWARD

Federal level:

Open enrollment for the ACA Marketplace ends December 15! The cost of Marketplace plans at all levels decreased for the first time this year and more insurers are participating. Better yet, most applicants find they are eligible for some financial assistance. Even if you already have health insurance, you should still shop around and see what's available this year.

You can apply for coverage at [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov). If you need enrollment assistance, call 844-644-5443.

State level:

The new Speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives Glen Casada recently mentioned that he was interested in [reinstating oversight subcommittees](#) for TennCare and children and families.

JOIN US

RSVP - Witness for Medicaid Expansion (Beginning of Legislative Session)

[Fill out this form to RSVP for the Witness for Medicaid Expansion on the day before the 2019 legislative session.](#)

When? Monday, January 7, 2019 - midday

Where? Downtown Nashville - gathering at a location in downtown Nashville, and going to the TN State Capitol.

What? We will gather for a witness to remind our legislators of how their failure to expand Medicaid has impacted us all. Together we will bring to the TN State Capitol photos and signs and other visuals telling the stories of people negatively impacted by the TN legislature's failure to expand Medicaid, and we will listen to

the stories of how Tennesseans have suffered because of the lack of expansion.

More details coming soon!

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.

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

Sincerely,

Kinika Young
Director of Children's Health
kyoung@tnjustice.org



STAY CONNECTED:



kyoung@tnjustice.org | 615-255-0331 | <https://www.tnjustice.org/>