

Children's Champion

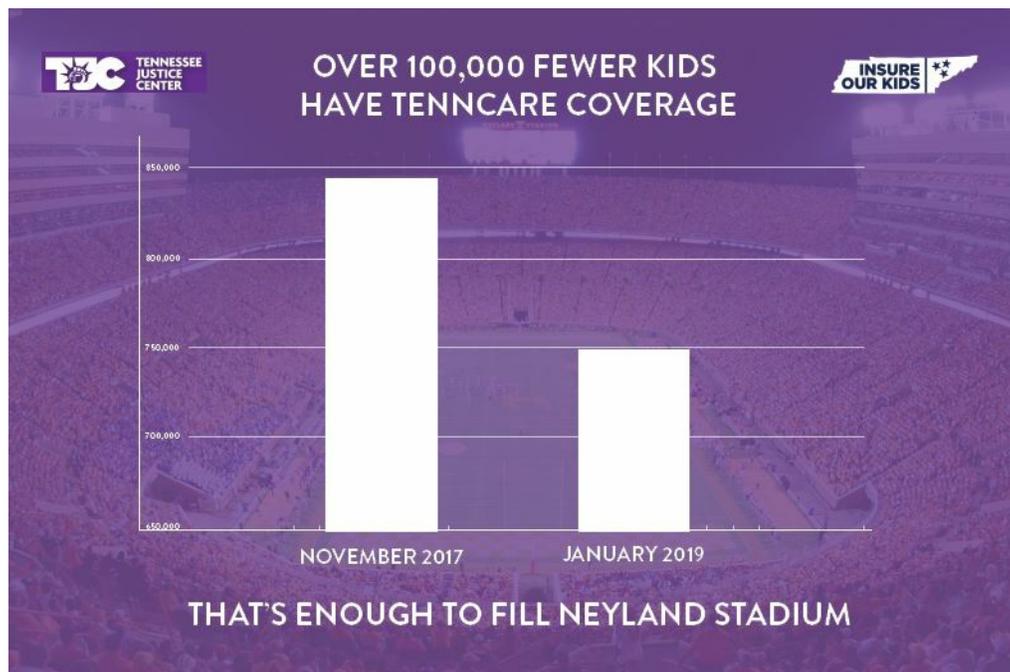
• April 11, 2019 •
Tennessee Justice Center

Last week, there was a watershed moment in the fight to promote children's health in Tennessee. As you may have seen, the Tennessean published a [front-page story](#) about 128,000 Tennessee children losing their health coverage. We also held a press conference about the issue with remarks from me, Denise Costanza of the American Heart Association, and Dr. Jill Obremeskey, a pediatrician. You can [watch the press conference here](#).

It's important that we keep this issue at the forefront of health care discussions. We urge you to [email Governor Bill Lee](#) and ask him to address children's coverage losses.

QUICK LINKS

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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.



ICYMI

- Together with Tennessee Voices for Children and Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee, we wrote a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee in opposition to House Bill 0836 and Senate Bill 1304, which would allow private licensed child-placing agencies to discriminate on the basis of religious or moral convictions or policies. You can [view the letter here](#).
 - The evidence is clear that social determinants of health (like housing and family circumstances) have an outsized impact on children's health and well-being. At least one-third of children enter foster care with a chronic health issue, such as asthma, and up to 80 percent enter in need of services for significant mental health issues, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children in foster care are more likely to be coming from traumatic home environments where they may have had adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), increasing the likelihood of chronic physical and mental health issues. Limiting the placement of children in stable homes on a discriminatory basis will contribute to negative outcomes related to social determinants of health.
 - For more information about the current state of foster care in Tennessee, see this Annie E. Casey Foundation [report](#) that shows that, despite national improvement in family placements, Tennessee has lost ground.
 - The House already passed this bill, but the Senate Judiciary Committee reset it to its final calendar on an unknown date. Please contact your senator and encourage them to oppose this bill.
- Please share information about free medical care available this Saturday 4/13 in Murfreesboro.

Medical Mission at Home

Rutherford County

April 13, 2019
8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Central Magnet School
701 East Main Street
Murfreesboro, TN



All services are FREE and NO insurance is needed. We will provide services on a FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED basis until the end of the mission day.

Free Services:

- Medical Care/Screenings
- Dental Care
- Vision Care
- Spiritual Care
- Select Prescriptions
- Mobile Mammography
- Foot Care/Foot Washing
- Community Services
- And More!

THE MORE YOU KNOW

Children's Disenrollment

As we mentioned in [last month's Children's Champion](#), at least 100,000 children have lost health insurance in the last two years. We are working hard to help get children re-enrolled in health coverage.

These increases in uninsured children coincide with [TennCare's manual redetermination process](#). It appears that a major cause of the loss of health coverage for children is TennCare's troubled process for redetermining enrollees' eligibility.

Most children should still have received coverage under special categories of TennCare and CoverKids, even if their household income increased. Of the 100,000 children who lost coverage, TennCare does not know how many children were actually ineligible and how many lost their coverage due to administrative issues, because TennCare does not track that data.

Resources for more information on coverage losses:

TJC's blog posts

- [Who's Minding the Store for Tennessee Children Relying on Medicaid and CHIP?](#)- Michele Johnson for Georgetown University Center for Children and Families
- [Over 128,000 Tennessee children purged from TennCare and CoverKids](#)

Media coverage

- [Tennessee erased insurance for at least 128,000 kids. Many parents don't know.](#) - Tennessean
- [Tennessee cancels kids insurance: These counties saw the biggest drops in](#)

- [kids enrolled in TennCare and CoverKids.](#) - Tennessean
- [If you lost insurance in the TennCare purge, there's a number you can call for help.](#) - Tennessean
- ['It's a terrible position to put someone in.' More than 27,000 Shelby County kids lost health insurance](#) - Commercial Appeal
- [Parents encouraged to check child's health insurance after TennCare drops 128,000 children](#) - Fox 17
- [Thousands of Tennessee kids cut from low-income Medicaid programs](#) - News Channel 5
- [Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke partners with Nashville group to find 5,500 low-income kids in Hamilton County who lost their TennCare coverage](#) - Chattanooga Times Free Press

LOOKING FORWARD

Federal level:

Work Requirements

A U.S. District Court judge in DC ruled that CMS' approval of the Medicaid work requirements waivers in Kentucky and Arkansas is unlawful. The administration has already appealed the ruling. Although we can't predict what will happen to Tennessee's work reporting requirements, we know that states that get their waivers approved will likely face a similar case with the same judge. You can find more information about judge's decision [here](#).

CMS Funding Opportunities for States

- The [Integrated Care for Kids \(InCK\) Model](#) is a child-centered local service delivery and state payment model that aims to reduce expenditures and improve the quality of care for children under 21 years of age covered by Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) through prevention, early identification, and treatment of behavioral and physical health needs. The model will empower states and local providers to better address these needs and the impact of opioid addiction through care integration across all types of healthcare providers. Integrated Care for Kids (InCK) Model applications are due 6/10/19.
- The [Maternal Opioid Misuse \(MOM\) Model](#) addresses fragmentation in the care of pregnant and postpartum Medicaid beneficiaries with opioid use disorder (OUD) through state-driven transformation of the delivery system surrounding this vulnerable population. By supporting the coordination of clinical care and the integration of other services critical for health, well-being, and recovery, the MOM model has the potential to improve quality of care and reduce costs for mothers and infants. Maternal Opioid Misuse (MOM) Model applications are due 5/6/19.

State level:

Block grants

The Tennessee legislature is moving quickly to pass a [Medicaid block grant bill](#) (HB 1280). The House passed it today (4/11), and it will be up for a vote in the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee 4/16. Please [call Governor Lee](#) and let him know you oppose Medicaid block grants.

Michele Johnson, Executive Director of the Tennessee Justice Center, said the following in regard to the passage of [HB1280](#), a bill to cut TennCare through a block grant:

"Today the House passed a bill to turn Medicaid into a block grant. The effect will be to cut federal Medicaid funds. The heaviest cuts will fall on those who can least bear them - children with special health care needs, seniors in nursing homes and

people with pre-existing conditions. A block grant will hurt patients, the healthcare infrastructure of our state, and our economy. Our elected officials need to solve the real-life problems that families face instead of playing politics with Tennesseans' healthcare."

You can find more information about Medicaid block grants on [our fact sheet](#) and you can find a recording of our press call with national experts [here](#).

Katie Beckett program

The bill (HB0498/ SB0476) to create a pathway to Medicaid services and essential wrap-around home- and community-based services for children at home who have long-term disabilities or complex medical needs (called a Katie Beckett/TEFRA Program) continues to move through the legislative process.

The next hurdle is in the House Finance, Ways & Means Subcommittee, which has placed the bill behind the budget. It is critical that our state budget includes funding for this program. Thanks to our partners at the Tennessee Disability Coalition for leading the efforts to get the bill passed. Please visit this [page](#) to learn how you can support these efforts.

JOIN US

TJC Mother's Day Luncheon: Celebrating Mothers and Their Champions

Wednesday May 8, 2019 11 AM CDT at Music City Center

Not all heroes wear capes. For two decades, TJC has observed Mother's Day by honoring the strength and determination of these advocates/heroes with the Tennessee Justice Center Mother of the Year Awards. Standing with families in times of crisis, the Tennessee Justice Center (TJC) has time and again witnessed the extraordinary power of parents' love. We have been inspired by moms and dads who persistently advocate not only for their own children but for all children - especially those with special needs.

To learn more and to purchase tickets, visit the event page [here](#).

Community Mothers of the Year Nominations

Each year, TJC seeks nominations from the community to honor "[Community Mothers of the Year](#)." These mothers fight to get their children the health care they need and thus are true health care heroes. Kids aged 3-9 can submit a drawing or photo that shows why their nominee is their healthcare hero. Kids aged 10 and up can submit a short essay (300 words or less) saying why their nominee is their special health care hero. Winners in each category will win a family photo shoot for their health care hero! [Click here](#) to download an application packet.

Nominations must be received by April 26, 2019. Contact Julia Dixon at jdixon@tnjustice.org or 615-846-4705 for more information.



Moms - Will you join us for a group discussion?

Volunteers Earn \$40

If your child receives TennCare, CoverKids, or SNAP we want to hear your opinions about how to improve children's experiences.

Text 'TJC' to 615.212.8617 to reserve your spot today!

Does your child receive TennCare, CoverKids, or SNAP? TJC is hosting a small group discussion so we can improve access to care for Tennessee kids. **We are looking for middle Tennessee moms who are available on May 1st or May 2nd from 5:15 to 7:45 PM CT.** Every caregiver who participates will receive **\$40** for sharing their thoughts and will be reimbursed up to \$15 for travel expenses. We hope you can join us for dinner and discussion! If you would like to attend, please text **'TJC'** to **615.212.8617**.

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:



