THE MORE YOU KNOW

TennCare enrollment slow, CoverKids notably declining

We have been monitoring children’s enrollment in TennCare and CoverKids, especially because of state and federal rules that mean kids should not be losing coverage right now. With the pause in disenrollment and economic decline, we were expecting to see significant increases in enrollment for these programs. Instead, we have seen the number of kids (age 0-19) enrolled in CoverKids drop by 5,185 since January.

This is particularly troubling during the pandemic when more families are losing coverage as a result of job loss and/or experiencing loss of income and odd because one of Gov. Lee's executive orders authorizes TennCare to stop redeterminations for both Medicaid and CHIP. Also, the state got CMS approval of its CHIP disaster relief SPA which waives the requirement to conduct eligibility renewals, among other things.

With a decline in CoverKids, you might expect increases in TennCare, but TennCare enrollment has had only a very modest increase, one of the slowest in the nation at 1.8% from February to June. And that's for the whole TennCare population, not just children. Tennessee has the 4th highest rate of child COVID-19 cases in the country, so we are particularly worried about children not having health insurance right now.

Our Insure Our Kids campaign has resources for you to use if you work with families who could benefit from TennCare or CoverKids. Almost every child is eligible for something in Tennessee, and we need to make sure that they know about these programs.
ICYMI

- Women’s Suffrage Centennial - Tuesday, August 18th marked 100 years since Tennessee ratified the 19th Amendment, which recognized the right to vote for women. They used the vote to win greater financial security for their families and improvements in public health. And now, as the world grapples with a devastating pandemic, legislators should honor the suffragists’ legacy by acting swiftly to extend health care and financial security to hundreds of thousands of Tennessee women and their loved ones. By expanding Medicaid, Tennessee’s lawmakers can also take an overdue step toward racial healing. States that have expanded Medicaid have significantly reduced racial disparities in coverage and have saved lives, improved access to healthcare and strengthened families’ financial security. Email your leaders to expand Medicaid to honor the legacy of women’s suffrage.

- "I honor suffragists with my vote...” social media campaign - Join us on social media this week and share how you are carrying on the efforts of the suffragists. Here’s an example!

I honor suffragists with my vote...

BY PICKING CANDIDATES WHO FIGHT FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

#100YEARS
#WOMENSHALTHVOTER

- For Facebook users: Download the image below onto your phone or computer. Add it to your story or post with the caption that answers the sentence, "I honor suffragists with my vote..."
I honor suffragists with my vote...

For Twitter users: Comment on this post with your answer to the question, "How does your vote honor suffragists?"

For Instagram users: The third image on this post is blank for you to personalize! Share the post to your story by clicking the “paper plane” icon below the picture. Tap on the blank portion of the screen and a type tool will appear. You can type out your answer to the sentence, “I honor suffragists with my vote…” and click done once you’ve finished typing.

- **Rooted in Racism Policy Brief** - The COVID-19 pandemic has drawn more widespread attention to the deep chasm that exists between people of color and White people in this country. Black and Hispanic people are three times as likely to be infected and twice as likely to die, yet state officials continue to block the expansion of federal Medicaid coverage to those low-wage, front line workers who are most at risk. The nonprofit Tennessee Justice Center authored a policy brief that explains how systemic racism dating back to the Civil War and continuing today has impacted our healthcare system and led to health disparities. One key factor is access to health care, and the refusal to expand Medicaid by mostly Southern states, including Tennessee, is perpetuating racial inequities. [READ THE BRIEF]

- **New blog post** - Check out a new blog post, Kentucky v. Tennessee – Which State Is Better at Covering Families?, written by King Child Health Fellow Heavyn Jennings.

- **Families need food** - Please share this flyer with QR codes for SNAP/WIC application with families.

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**STUDENT AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT**

Shayba Biswa
Shabya is passionate about women’s health issues and wants to work with her native country of Nepal to expand healthcare access for all.

“In order to have a healthy community you need people to be in good health. A community without people is meaningless. Healthcare should be considered a service to the community and when it is all money driven it is no longer what it was founded upon, which is to help people be healthy.”

You can learn more about TJC’s Student Ambassador Program here.

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**LOOKING FORWARD**

**Federal updates**

- Congress has still not taken action to address health insurance losses. Comprehensive health insurance protects against crushing medical bills and provides access to care for both COVID-19 and other medical conditions. By next year, we expect 19% of adults in Tennessee will be uninsured. We are calling on Senator Alexander and all members of Congress to step up and ensure there is a path to comprehensive, affordable health coverage for the rising number of workers who are uninsured in the next Congressional relief package.

  [Email Sen. Alexander NOW]

**State updates**
• Pandemic-Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Program - P-EBT provides money to families or guardians with children who receive free or reduced-price school meals, or who attend a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school that offers free school meals to all students.

• P-EBT Updates
  o Over 200,000 children are still missing out on P-EBT benefits.
  o The application deadline ended on Friday, August 14.
  o Help us reach all Tennessee children who need this support:
    ▪ [https://tnimmigrant.salsalabs.org/pebtactionalert/index.html](https://tnimmigrant.salsalabs.org/pebtactionalert/index.html)
    ▪ [https://twitter.com/tnimmigrant/status/129360304528525722](https://twitter.com/tnimmigrant/status/129360304528525722)
    ▪ [https://www.facebook.com/tnimmigrant/posts/10157883718909069](https://www.facebook.com/tnimmigrant/posts/10157883718909069)
  o If you know someone who missed the deadline, let TJC’s Nutrition Team know at nutrition@tnjustice.org.
  o P-EBT is a one-time funding support for families. If you want P-EBT to continue, call your Senators and other elected officials to tell them this is important to your family or help your neighbors.

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JOIN US

TJC and The Equity Alliance: Advocacy 101 Training

[Image]

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27
11 AM CT/12 PM ET

[REGISTER HERE](#)

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  
Senior Director of Health Policy and Advocacy  
Tennessee Justice Center

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