MORE YOU KNOW

New Data Finds Number of Uninsured Children Increasing at Alarming Rate

Analysis shows 38% increase in the number of uninsured Tennessee children between 2016 and 2019

An estimated 80,000 Tennessee children were uninsured last year, a number that has increased about 38% since 2016, according to a new report released by the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families. Tennessee’s experience is part of a national trend that left an estimated 726,000 more children without health coverage nationwide since our country achieved an historic low number of uninsured children. Many of the coverage gains of the Affordable Care Act for children have now been eliminated. Coverage losses have been concentrated in the South and West and have been largest for white and Latino children.
The increase in the number and rate of uninsured children occurred prior to the pandemic and associated economic downturn and is attributable to losses of public coverage – primarily Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program. The situation has most likely deteriorated in 2020 for children as their parents lost their jobs and health coverage this year, but there is still no reliable data to estimate the extent of these coverage losses.

“These numbers are more proof of a growing number of Tennessee’s children going without health insurance,” said Kinika Young, senior director of health policy and advocacy at the Tennessee Justice Center. “This damaging trend will have long-term consequences for children and communities across Tennessee because without health coverage, children cannot access the care they need to grow and thrive.”

Research shows children with health coverage are more likely to graduate from high school, attend college and grow up to be healthier and more productive adults.

“State leaders need to get rid of the red tape in TennCare that denies eligible kids health coverage and expand Medicaid because when parents are insured their kids are more likely to get and stay covered,” said Kinika Young.

The report analyzes single-year estimates of summary data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) from 2016 through 2019.

ICYMI

- **Rural health survey** – Since 2012, there have been 14 rural hospital closures in Tennessee. 23 counties in Tennessee do not have a hospital. We want to learn more about how these rural hospital closures have affected those in these areas. Share your experience: [https://www.tnjustice.org/ruralhospital-survey/](https://www.tnjustice.org/ruralhospital-survey/)
- **Child poverty op-ed** - [When will Tennessee address child poverty? We can’t afford to wait any longer.](https://www.tennessean.com/opinion/2019/05/23/when-will-tennessee-address-child-poverty-we-cant-afford-to-wait-anymore/), Michele Johnson, TJC Executive Director, published by the Tennessean.
- **#HealthcareVoterTN** - Are you a health care voter? Kids can’t vote, but we need to promote policies with their best interests at heart. [Email our leaders and let them know you are a health care voter.](https://secure.everyaction.com/EmailMessage/PreviewMessage/90f02061-d013-eb11-96f5-00155d03affc)
- **Share your story** - Why are you a healthcare voter? What is your experience with the healthcare system? We want to know! [Fill out this form](https://secure.everyaction.com/EmailMessage/PreviewMessage/90f02061-d013-eb11-96f5-00155d03affc) or scan the QR code below.
LOOKING FORWARD

Federal updates

- **Protect the ACA** - After a federal appeals court removed the individual mandate, the Supreme Court will decide whether the entire ACA should be struck down, bringing us one step closer to people with pre-existing conditions losing their health coverage and weakening their families' financial security. The lawsuit, filed by Tennessee and other states, creates chaos and fear for the 40% of adult Tennesseans with pre-existing conditions. The results of this lawsuit, if our leaders had their way, would be catastrophic. Before the ACA, insurance companies could – and often did – deny health insurance to millions of Americans with common conditions such as diabetes, asthma, cancer and even pregnancy. If the ACA was repealed, it would cause at least 526,000 Tennesseans and millions of people across the country (including children) to lose coverage, eliminate protections for pre-existing conditions, and cause prices to go up for everyone, especially older adults and women. The case continues to move forward despite the global pandemic and economic crisis. Oral arguments in the case begin November 10. [Check out our new ACA page and take action to protect the ACA](#).

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. Families who missed the August 14th deadline to apply for P-EBT have another opportunity. Parents should call the school their child attended in Spring 2020 and see if they qualify. [Learn more here](#).
**JOIN US**

Medicaid Eligibility Master Class  
A Virtual Training Event  
Mastering the Red Tape Maze of Medicaid  
October 27 - 28, 2020

Hosted by

TENNESSEE JUSTICE CENTER

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**REGISTER TODAY!**

Medicaid Eligibility Master Class - A Virtual Training Event  
*Mastering the Red Tape Maze of Medicaid*  
Hosted by Tennessee Justice Center  
**October 27 - 28, 2020**

If you’re a healthcare provider or advocate, looking to unlock resources for your youngest patients, then you won’t want to miss our two-day virtual training event on mastering the red tape maze of Medicaid. Check out the agenda full of informative sessions, virtual discussion groups, and moderated panels to help you navigate Tennessee’s ever-shifting policies and practices. *This training event has been approved for 10 hours of CEUs and 10.5 hours of CLEs.*

To learn more about the event or to register, please visit [https://www.tnjustice.org/event/medicaid-eligibility-master-class-a-virtual-training-event/](https://www.tnjustice.org/event/medicaid-eligibility-master-class-a-virtual-training-event/).
Medicaid: Who it helps and who still needs it
TJC & The Equity Alliance
Thursday, October 29
11 AM CT/12 PM ET
REGISTER HERE

Are the Kids Alright? How to Support Children & Youth with Mental Health Challenges
Webinar
November 11, 12 PM CT
Get insights and tips from experts at Mental Health America of the MidSouth.

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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