

Legally Residing Children & Florida KidCare

Innovations

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Credits

Agency for Health Care Administration
Central Florida Health Care, Inc
Department of Health, Broward County
Florida Covering Kids & Families
Lawton & Rhea Chiles Center
Primary Care Access Network
University of South Florida



Local Projects Continue to Go Beyond the Application to Get Legally Residing Kids Covered

Two years have passed since Florida elected to enact its Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act (ICHIA) option to cover children who are lawfully present and otherwise eligible without having a 5-year waiting period. Previously, lawfully residing non-citizen children in Florida were required to wait five years before they were eligible to enroll in Medicaid or CHIP.

Putting it into perspective, in 2015, there were 4.1 million immigrants in Florida (20% of the population), 219,060 of which were immigrant children (American Immigration Council, 2017). An estimated 17,000 children in Florida did not qualify for Florida KidCare until Florida removed the 5-year waiting period (Alker, 2016).

In order to qualify for Medicaid or CHIP, children must be both **lawfully present** and **lawfully residing**. Lawfully present includes: qualified non-citizens (regardless of waiting period),

humanitarian statuses or circumstances, valid non-immigrant visa holders, etc. To be lawfully residing, children must be residents of the state in which they are applying (CMS, 2010). In summary, to be lawfully residing, the child "must be both lawfully present and a state resident [of Florida]" (NILC, 2016).

The benefits of Florida eliminating the 5-year waiting period go beyond making affordable health coverage available to lawfully residing children. Florida can enroll more eligible family members by lifting the 5-year waiting period since many citizen children have siblings who are lawfully residing, but not yet citizens. Parents can now enroll their citizen and lawfully residing children at the same time in Medicaid and CHIP and will no longer have to delay or forgo a visit to the doctor for any of their children (NILC, July 2016).

While the local Florida KidCare Coalitions and partners have focused their outreach on legally residing children for quite some time, they refocused and reinvigorated their outreach efforts when the new guidelines went into effect in 2016 in order to enroll the newly eligible immigrant children.

This Innovation Report will highlight the innovative and time-tested outreach efforts conducted by local Florida KidCare Coalitions and assisters in: Broward (7% uninsured child rate in 2016), Orange (5.7%), and Polk (5.8%) counties; all of which have high uninsured rates and high immigrant children populations. While these rates are among the highest, we will show how their outreach efforts have been lowering these rates at a steady pace (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 ACS 1-Year estimate).

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ESTABLISHING AND MAXIMIZING PARTNERSHIPS TO ENROLL AND RETAIN LEGALLY RESIDING CHILDREN

Local Florida KidCare outreach projects have masterfully maximized their existing partnerships to best serve their communities, as well as enroll and retain legally residing children. The Broward County Department of Health Florida (BDOH) KidCare Assistants leveraged their partnership with Nova Southern University (NSU) as they planned ahead in preparation for the day the new eligibility guidelines went into effect. BDOH assistants methodically combed through their records going back four years and contacted every family they assisted who had not been approved due to the five year waiting period. BDOH contacted the families by phone, by mail, and sent flyers to all the local schools (flyer pictured below). In July 2016, they had an application assistance event hosted at NSU and submitted 179 applications just at that one event. NSU not only provided its atrium and computers for enrollment, but food and transportation for the families to attend the enrollment event. Additionally, BDOH has a partnership with the Haitian-American Radio Station of South Florida (WSRF 1580 AM), which hosts community-based dialogue and gives Rebecca Miele, Florida KidCare Outreach Program Manager at the Department of Health in Broward, free media from time to time to talk about Florida KidCare and other healthcare information to best serve the community. Ms. Miele is also interviewed on television, publishes Florida KidCare information in the *Salud al Dia* magazine (depicted below) and receives 20 minutes of free air time at the *Al Dia* radio station.

Likewise, counties in Central Florida also have high numbers of both immigrant and uninsured children. Fortunately, there are two local Florida KidCare outreach partners covering the area. Central Florida Health Care (CFHC) covers Polk, Hardee, and Highlands counties, and the Primary Care Access Network (PCAN) covers Orange County. The PCAN Navigators work closely with the Mexican Consulate in Orlando and attend health events there monthly, where they can provide Florida KidCare information to families. They often encounter families there that may not be in the US legally, but whose children are. Anne Packham, Project Director of PCAN, works closely with Representative Darren Soto, who is heavily involved with the Hispanic community and has allowed her to present about Florida KidCare at one of his town meetings. CFHC Director of Enabling Services, Ermelinda Centeno, also has contacts at local media outlets and is able to get the word out about Florida KidCare. Ms. Centeno and her assistants are frequent guests at television interviews on the Polk County Government TV show: *¿Que Pasa Polk?*. CFHC's assistants also get the word out on social media and the Lakeland Ledger newspaper. In order to best reach families in need, CFHC additionally uses various methods to track their application process, as well as to see community needs and which zip codes have the highest uninsured rate, like Haines City. CFHC focuses on areas like Haines City and opened a new clinic there in November 2017, as well as brought a new Navigator onboard. Ermelinda Centeno feels strongly that there will be a big increase in the number of insured children in Haines City for 2018 and forward. The impact of CFHC outreach efforts can be seen by the steady increase in Florida KidCare enrollments from July 2016. From July 2016 until April 2018, Polk County Title XXI enrollments increased from 6,170 to 7,601 and Title XXI enrollments increased from 90,573 to 94,859 (Agency for Health Care Administration).

Twitter post by Anne Packham (@anne_packham) retweeted by Enroll SWFL.

Enroll SWFL @EnrollSWFL · 27 Jun 2016
Good News! The 5 year wait period will end July 1st for all lawfully residing children in FL to get Florida KidCare.

The five-year waiting period will be eliminated

Starting July 1st, 2016
all lawfully residing children in Florida will qualify for health insurance through Florida KidCare (Medicaid, Medikids and Healthy Kids).

Call for free in-person assistance
1.866.547.2793

Navigators
HEALTH PLANNING COUNCIL
of Southwestern Florida, Inc.

COMUNIDAD AL DIA

Florida KidCare

Nuevas normas que lo hacen ahora más asequible

Florida KidCare
Seguro de salud gratuito o a bajo costo

TODAVÍA NECESITA SEGURO DE SALUD PARA SUS NIÑOS?

Su hijo ahora pudiera ser elegible para Florida KidCare bajo las nuevas regulaciones de Inmigración! Empezando Julio 1 del 2016, los niños que residen legalmente ya no tendrán un periodo de espera de cinco años.

Florida KidCare ofrece seguro médico para niños desde el nacimiento hasta cumplir los 19 años de edad.

La mayoría de las familias pagan \$15 o \$20 mensuales.

PARA MAS INFORMACION LLAME AL:
(954)-INSURES (467-8737)
O Visite www.HealthyKids.org

LIVE UNITED
HEALTH

Children's Community Council

NOVA UNIVERSITY

Healthy Kids

Source: Anne Packham (PCAN) Twitter @anne_packham

Source: Salud al Dia #67 and #68, Broward Department of Health

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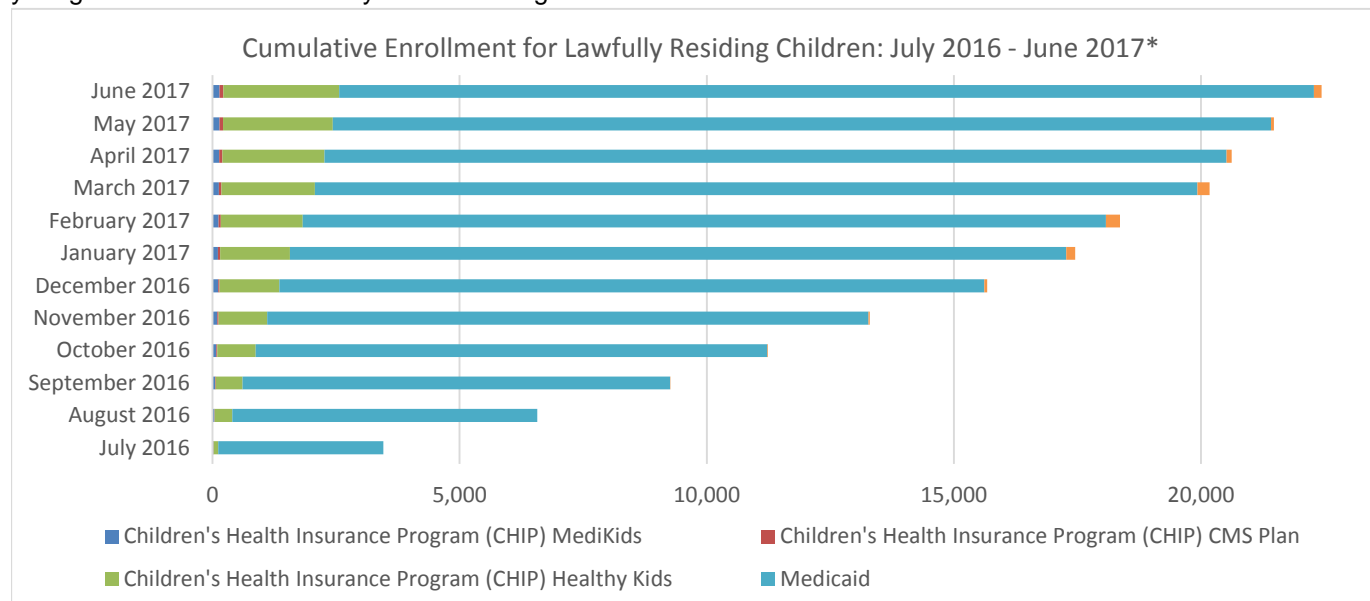
Innovations

USING PARTNERSHIPS TO FIND AND CONNECT WITH IMMIGRANT FAMILIES AND GET THEIR CHILDREN COVERED

The partners highlighted in this report operate in counties with high uninsured rates, high numbers living below the poverty level, and high numbers of foreign born children. According to the American Community Survey estimates, in 2016 Broward County had an estimated 7% uninsured, 8.1% foreign born, and 19.5% living below poverty level. Polk County had an estimated 5.8% uninsured, 2.5% foreign born, and 27.2% living below the poverty level. Orange County had an estimated 5.7% uninsured, 5.7% foreign born, and 24.8% living below the poverty level. The counties also have some of the highest Florida KidCare enrollment numbers. As of April 2018, Broward County had 29,007 children enrolled in Title XXI (2nd to Miami-Dade) and 198,276 in Title XIX (Medicaid); Orange County had 15,023 Title XXI (4th highest) and 161,421 Title XXI, and Polk had 7,454 Title XXI (9th) and 94,859 in Title XIX (Agency for Health Care Administration, May 2018).

There is a clear consensus that having a bilingual staff is very important in order to better connect with the people, particularly with the fear of deportation if families apply for health care or any other forms of social services. Having staff who speak the language of the immigrant families, as well as having strong partners within the community are vital to finding and enrolling legally residing children. In addition to having bilingual staff, the Broward County Department of Health Florida (BDOH) KidCare Assisters have an immigration specialist who works with families as they have technical issues related to immigration. All the staff members also have a list of resources of providers and other partners that act as a full service one stop (diaper bank, food banks, clinics, etc.) for families and refer families to each other for different services as needed. BDOH works with the Broward County Public Schools' English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Teachers and Title I Guidance Counselors, both of which serve migrant families and low-income families. ESOL teachers keep materials for the parents and refer parents in need of health insurance during their enrollment days to BDOH. BDOH also works with the ESOL Parent Leader Council and Latino Health, Latino in Action, Haitian Coalition of Broward County, the Refugee Task Force, and many more. As Rebecca Miele shares, she and BDOH have been working in the community for quite some time, during which they have forged strong partnerships and trust within the community.

Partnerships with the local schools are also a vital asset to reach eligible families. CFHC operates in Polk County and has an impactful partnership with the Polk Migrant Education Program (MEP) and works closely with Migrant Advocates at the local schools. MEP provides eligible migrant students and their families access to quality educations, health, and social service opportunities through partnerships with local schools and community agencies. CFHC Assister Tara Frank has been working in the Polk community for over 20 years and shares that: "It is about building relationships, not just doing the applications. You go where they are." By working with Migrant Advocates at the schools, assisters are able to reach eligible families all the way to their homes and also find younger children who are not yet of school age and in need of health insurance.



Source: Agency for Health Care Administration

*Most recent data available.

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COLLABORATING WITH CLINICS AND OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES TO ENROLL AND RETAIN LEGALLY RESIDING CHILDREN AND SERVE THE COMMUNITIES.

Anne Packham reiterates the importance of conducting outreach at the free clinics in Orange County. PCAN Navigators conduct outreach at Shepherd's Hope in Apopka and Longwood Shepherd's Hope, one to two evenings a week. Both are free clinics that do not require any paper work, making them the first place immigrant families turn to for healthcare services. Navigators also attend events at the Hope CommUnity Center in Apopka and at the Mexican consulate in Orlando. Packham shared that while many families in Orange County are in an undocumented status, their children were born in the United States and qualify for Florida KidCare. Collaboration with the Center for Multi-Cultural Awareness is key in the enrollment of legally residing children, particularly from Haitian families. The center often refers families needing health insurance for the children and their families to the PCAN Navigators. Furthermore, both PCAN and CFHC and their community partners are able to work jointly to educate families and dispell rumors that keep families from enrolling in services that they are eligible for. The rumors range from changes in immigration policy, fear of deportation of undocumented families if they apply for Florida KidCare and are found out. In regards to monitoring the impact of their outreach efforts, Ms. Packham shared that "the only way that we know that an event is succesful is if it ultimately results in an appointment [in connector], but not everything we do results in an appointment. The person may get home and call the number in the KidCare brochure." However, she continued that they are able to monitor to a degree by using the referral source as a way to gauge how we got appointments, such as the referrals from Shepperd's Hope and the Longwood Clinic.

Source: Anne Packham Twitter, October 2016

CFHC has eleven clinics throught Polk County that operate under a sliding scale model. Navigators at each clinic conduct inreach (outreach from within) and use their time in waiting rooms to educate patients and families on the Florida Department of Children and Families Automated Community Connection to Economic Self Sufficiency (ACCESS) and Florida KidCare applications, and ultimately enroll them in health insurance. CFHC Navigators also are often out in the field with their iPads in order to be able do applications on the spot. They go to places such as HUD housing communities and surrounding low income to medium income areas. Ms. Centento shared that after the waiting period was lifted: "We started off with looking at all the children that may have been scheduled to see the doctor and did not have health insurance and we made sure that they came in to see the navigator so that they can do an application for them." She added that CFHC Navigators also asked the adults coming to their clinics if they have children who need health insurance, adding that: "we know that the law still stands for adults, but has been eliminated for children and many people do not know that." Mrs. Centento has been looking at data, sharing that "in Polk County, for example, we have definitely seen a significant drop. I want to say the last time I looked we were at 6.2% of uninsured children, and we were previously at a 13%, so we definitely brought that down". CFHC Assister Tara Frank shares that thanks to their outreach efforts, "[families] now can stop using hospitals for primary care and establish a relationship with a familiar pediatrician for continuity of care allowing their preventative visits to be kept."

Source: CFHC Twitter Page, August 2017



Source: Central Florida Health Care