

# Innovations



## Applying a Multi-Prong Approach to Florida KidCare Outreach

This Innovation Report will delve into how outreach efforts around the state use a combination of different strategies and activities to reach that first family, who then tells other families about Florida KidCare, the state’s Children’s Health Insurance Program and Children’s Medicaid Program.

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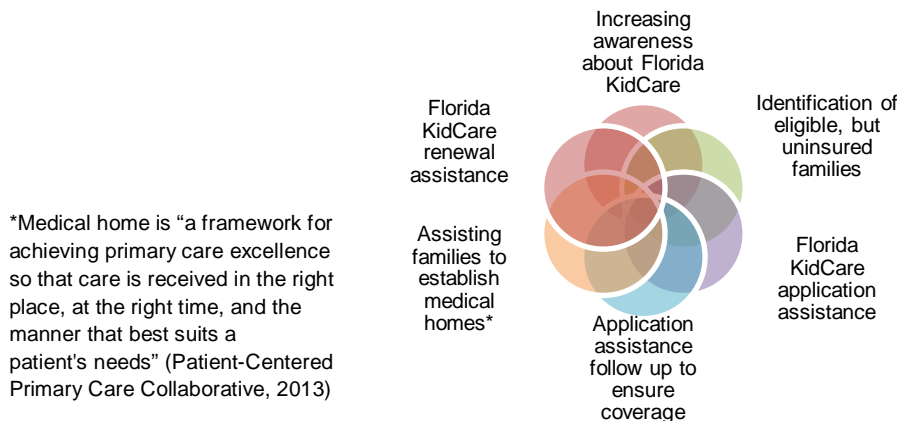
Successful, effective outreach projects are those that involve several different approaches and are results-oriented. Statewide Florida KidCare outreach strategies and activities are based on a circular process that begins and ends with educating families about the importance of health care coverage for children. It is a multi-prong approach to addressing complex issues; leveraging scarce resources; reducing barriers for families; and creates significant, measurable improvements.

To increase access to health care coverage for children through community-based efforts, Economic and Social Research Institute (2000) recommends targeting “locations and agencies that serve the eligible populations”, such as schools, child care centers, child support enforcement programs, and medical providers. A successful outreach program goes beyond providing general information about health care coverage programs. Effective outreach needs to incorporate training for these partnering agencies to actually assist parents in completing application and renewal forms.

Establishing a multi-prong approach means partnering with community-based entities that are “established, trusted positions in their communities” (Economic and Social Research Institute, 2000). The West Virginia Community Voices Project (WVCV) has been a best practices example of how projects utilize different outreach strategies to increase enrollment and retention within CHIP and Children’s Medicaid programs (Economic and Social Research Institute, 2000). WVCV’s multi-prong outreach efforts employed outreach workers to work within “schools, churches, health care providers; social service agencies, and family resource networks”. The outreach workers were trained to assist families with completing applications and ensure all documentation and required information is provided. Additionally, outreach workers would help families throughout the application process, assisting to clarify an application issues to ensure children were enrolled.

These partners are able to identify families with uninsured children that are eligible for health care coverage, plus have the skills to assist families in navigating the application and renewal processes successfully. This may be the key to why multi-prong outreach strategies are best practices. The utilization of multiple partners in a variety of settings targets outreach efforts and builds strong relationships within communities to ascertain access gaps are closed. The ultimate goal of the multi-prong approach is to eliminate barriers for families to enroll and maintain their child’s health care coverage.

Figure 1: Florida KidCare Enrollment and Retention Outreach Efforts



## Strategic Statewide Outreach Initiatives

Highlighting statewide, multi-prong, outreach approaches is important. Multi-prong approaches to Florida KidCare outreach emphasize significant efforts to reduce the impact of uninsured children on the state. Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families (2012) found a 2.9% drop in Florida's uninsured children between 2009 and 2010. Florida Impact (2012) cited one of the top reasons for this decrease in the uninsured children population within Florida are the "numerous local outreach efforts that have used a mix of state and federal grants to target uninsured children through billboards, television advertising and other marketing methods.

*Florida Covering Kids & Families* (FL-CKF) works collaboratively with Florida agencies, local Florida KidCare outreach projects, and stakeholders to foster and facilitate statewide Florida KidCare enrollment and retention. The multi-prong strategic approach FL-CKF takes towards outreach is to ensure outreach objectives and activities across the state are family, community, and programmatic focused.

Since 1999, the utilization of a multi-prong approach is how FL-CKF has designed statewide outreach activities. These include:

- Community Navigator/Develop Application Assistance Sites
- Referral programs
- Community coalitions
- Military/Veteran outreach
- Business outreach
- School-based outreach
- Children's hospital-based outreach
- Faith-based outreach
- Press Enrollment Events
- Link with Text4Baby
- Teen Campaign
- English Language Learner (ELL) & Refugee Outreach

The priorities that drive these activities ensure that they are results driven and connected to actual enrollment, using data; messages are relevant for specific target populations; and partners share best practices/ lessons learned for potential replication of strategies.

This report highlights three such examples of implementation of a multi-prong Florida KidCare outreach at the local level and highlight how these efforts vary from one community to the next. Broward County Health Department, Florida Community Health Centers and Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida are FL-CKF partners that have embraced the priorities to implement their own multi-prong approaches to Florida KidCare outreach. The Florida KidCare enrollments within each of these geographic regions have shown significant increases, corroborating this as an innovative method to reach families with uninsured children.



*Florida KidCare Local Coalition  
Annual Meeting May 2013*



*Refugee, English Language  
Learner Train the Trainer*



*2013 Polk County Back-To-School  
Enrollment/Media Event*

## Broward County Health Department Florida KidCare Outreach Project



The Broward County Health Department (BCHD) Florida KidCare outreach program incorporates on-site application assistance at different Health Department locations throughout the county, focusing on uninsured children that come into the Health Department for their immunization, physical, WIC, dental and other services. To expand their outreach efforts into the community, BCHD also uses multi-prong approaches that include: business outreach; school-based enrollment/renewal; medical provider outreach; and certified application assistance sites with community partners. These outreach efforts are funded through a variety of sources to include funding from the Children’s Services Council of Broward County, Florida Healthy Kids Corporation, and Florida Covering Kids & Families.

### Business Outreach

A partnership with Work Force One and their Rapid Response program with Consolidated Credit, involves going into businesses that have 100 or more employees that are going to be losing their jobs to show them how important it is to have a budget and credit. The BCHD’s Florida KidCare Outreach Project talks to the families; sees what benefit package they will have when leaving their position; how long they will have insurance; and then makes a follow-up appointment to make sure to get these families into the Florida KidCare program for their children. This project works with families to ensure there isn’t a gap in coverage.

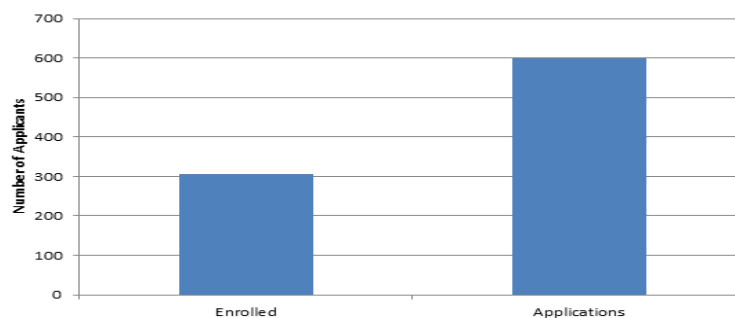
### Community-Based Certified Application Assistance Partners

The BCHD Florida KidCare Outreach Program is one of the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation, Inc.’s Regional Navigator grantees. This project builds and trains community partners to assist families looking to enroll or renew their Florida KidCare coverage. The program works closely with the hospitals, school district, clinics, the federal funding clinics, and any other organizations that may service families that are uninsured. There is a Florida KidCare informational meeting once a month to discuss issues and barriers to enrollment. From July 1, 2012 through April 30, 2013 this component of BCHD’s outreach project has completed 745 new applications and 59 renewals.

### School-Based Outreach

BCHD is a CHIPRA Cycle II grantee, which is a school-based outreach grant. Through this project, BCHD works with the Broward County School District to determine an internal data source to identify potentially eligible children in order to facilitate enrollment/retention procedures. The project uses data from the school districts free and reduced lunch applications, which indicate if a child does not have health insurance, to reach out to families and offer application assistance. During the 2012/2013 school year, BCHD has reached out to 2,310 families using the 2012 free and reduced lunch data list. This project also trains someone in each school to provide on-site application assistance to the families and schools that have designated computers with tent cards containing the Florida KidCare customer service phone number and instructions on how to complete the online application.

Figure Two: Broward County CHIPRA Cycle II Applications/Enrollments August 2012 – May 2013



## Broward County Health Department *Continued*

### Community Outreach/Enrollment Events

BCHD also staffs many community events and school activities such as open houses with the schools and parent nights. Once a year, the project works with the ESOL department to provide them with training on how to identify uninsured children and refer them to BCHD for enrollment/renewal assistance. BCHD also educates coaches from the county high schools to make sure that their football players and athletes are insured.

Rebecca Miele, BCHD Florida KidCare Outreach Coordinator, believes what makes BCHD's outreach efforts innovative is, *"you need to create partners that will get you to uninsured families; targeting local clinics, hospitals, pediatricians is where you are going to start. Then a project also needs the 'back-up' of your agency, an administrator that has faith in the project, as our administrator has faith in our project."* BCHD serves a lot of families on a daily basis -- families that go there because they don't have health care coverage. This is the perfect place for enrolling and targeting families.



Rebecca Miele, BCHD Florida KidCare Outreach Coordinator

## Florida Community Health Centers, Inc. Florida KidCare Outreach Project: The Multi-Prong Approach in a Rural Setting



Florida Community Health Centers, Inc. (FCHC) is a network of health centers surrounding Lake Okeechobee in South-Central Florida, encompassing Hendry, Glades, Okeechobee, St. Lucie, Martin and the western area of Palm Beach County. With the exception of St. Lucie and Martin, all of the service areas for FCHC are considered rural, based on having a population density of less than 100 individuals per square mile (Florida Department of Health, 2012). Despite being classified as rural, FCHC's region has some of the highest numbers of uninsured children, at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (U.S. Census, 2009).

This is why FCHC began their Florida KidCare outreach efforts over three years ago. The goal for their Florida Outreach project was to focus on developing community partnerships to provide education, information, and application assistance throughout the region. Those efforts were difficult to balance and FCHC found there was not a significant decrease in the number of uninsured child population. Community partners reported to FCHC that they were struggling with allocating staff time to assist families through the Florida KidCare application process. At the same time, FCHC and the local Florida KidCare coalition had families coming to them claiming to be confused and unsure about where to find application assistance within the community.

FCHC, their local partners, and the Okeechobee Florida KidCare coalition decided to focus their outreach strategies on using community partners to educate families about Florida KidCare and refer them to FCHC for application assistance. Through this approach, more families are completing the application process successfully, leading to more children being enrolled into Florida KidCare. Since 2010, the Title XXI enrollment (CHIP) and Title XIX (Children's Medicaid) have each increased by 9%.

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## Florida Community Health Centers, Inc. Florida KidCare Outreach Project *Continued*

### Community Outreach

FCHC's multi-prong education/referral outreach includes working with: local businesses; medical providers; migrant farms; and community social service agencies. The foundation to the multi-prong approach that FCHC has been utilizing this past year begins with outreach workers that are in the community attending different events; incorporating the role of Florida KidCare education and outreach into existing employee's responsibilities. These are the individuals with one-on-one contact with businesses, daycares, and schools. FCHC's Director of Special Services, Leah Suarez, shares the "nuts and bolts" behind FCHC's successful outreach strategies, "*we do really weird things that aren't weird things- we just aren't afraid to try things.*" Examples of FCHC's "out of the box" community outreach involve decorating Christmas trees with Florida KidCare marketing materials and placing them in the lobby of their community partners'; and working with a group of teens to orchestrate flash mob during the Okeechobee Health Safety Expo this spring. The teens wore hats that were crafted from Florida KidCare posters and post cards. After the flash mob, the teens assisted with passing out Florida KidCare educational materials.



*Move Yo Move Your Body Flash Mob  
Okeechobee Health Safety Expo 2013*

### Health Navigators

When a family inquires about application/renewal assistance at a community event or at one of the FCHC centers, they are referred to a health navigator. FCHC funds the health navigators that assist families with applications at FCHC centers. While the outreach workers are trained and can do enrollments at events, they do not have the capacity to help families navigate the Florida KidCare system or assist with finding medical homes like the health navigators. Within May 2013, FCHC's health navigators assisted 47 families with the Florida KidCare application and were able to confirm that 59 children had been approved for Florida KidCare.

### Business Outreach

FCHC's business outreach focuses on the business owners throughout the Glades. These businesses hire approximately 500 migrant farm workers that work 6 months of the year then get laid off. During the six-month lay-off period, if they don't migrate somewhere else to work, they need assistance because the health care coverage for their children has such a high deductible that they can't afford to pay it while laid off. FCHC has the businesses distribute flyers telling families that they can come to one of the FCHC centers for application assistance. Suarez believes that FCHC's successes at reaching families with uninsured children and connecting those families to Florida KidCare is because FCHC has "*a network of people – partners and consumers - who are invested in knowing the resources that are available to help build a healthy community.*"

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## Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida: Florida KidCare Outreach Project



The Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida (Lee Memorial) is the only comprehensive child healthcare facility between Tampa and Miami. Unlike FCHC's network of invested partners, Lee Memorial is the principal organization leading Florida KidCare outreach within Lee and Charlotte Counties.

Lee Memorial's involvement in Florida KidCare enrollment/retention outreach began in April 2011, as part of FL-CKF's Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) Cycle I project. The project has grown from one part-time outreach specialist working within Lee Memorial's Children's Hospital's outpatient department, to a major component of sustainability for the hospital system. Lee Memorial's Florida KidCare Outreach Program, funded solely through the hospital system, has been incorporated into several of the hospitals, physician's offices, emergency rooms, and is the epicenter for Lee County Public Schools' enrollment and retention efforts.

### Community Events

When the Lee Memorial Florida KidCare Outreach project first began, it had difficulties identifying families with uninsured children. A data system had yet to be established for the hospital-based outreach, so the project started working more on community outreach, building relationships with the hospital community. This involved attending community events with the Child Advocacy Center or attending community-based health fairs. Anytime the hospital mentioned fairs, children, and they were looking for outreach, the Florida KidCare outreach project was in attendance providing education and application assistance.

### Hospital-Based Outreach

The hospital-based outreach efforts began within the outpatient department of the Golisano Children's Hospital. Through attending community-based events, the Florida KidCare project was able to raise awareness about Florida KidCare and the hospital's application/renewal assistance. As the requests for application assistance started to increase, the hospital realized that the opportunity for enrollment assistance was overwhelming in the emergency room. The emergency room was determined to be "a revolving door" that was being utilized as a primary care center because Lee Memorial is a non-profit hospital. The Florida KidCare outreach project established a system to identify the families with uninsured children, during the emergency room administration process. Once the family had seen a doctor, the Florida KidCare outreach workers then work directly with the emergency room patients' families to complete Florida KidCare applications. The Florida KidCare outreach workers then follow up with families to ensure all income and citizenship verification documentation has been submitted and attached to the family's Florida KidCare application and assist any families that may have challenges to getting their applications processed.

Once this emergency room outreach process was established, Lee Memorial reached out to the Lee County School District, working with Dr. Burke, who was the superintendent at that time. Dr. Burke had received a letter from the governor stating that the district's help was needed to eliminate uninsured children and it would be in the Lee County School Board's best interest to actually have insurance for their children.

### School-Based Outreach

Lee Memorial began working with the school district in August of 2012, sending out Florida KidCare postcards within every child's welcome back to school package. Then the project began to educate/train district staff that was indirectly in contact with families of uninsured children. These trainings included: the school nurses, athletic directors, counselors, and social workers on how to assist families to apply for Florida KidCare. As a result of these trainings, Lee Memorial partnered with Lee County Schools, to establish a Florida KidCare school-based enrollment/retention outreach project. The basis of this project is to train then work with the school nurses to identify then refer families with uninsured children to Lee Memorial for application assistance. The school nurses in turn assist Lee Memorial with following with families to ensure that they complete the application process, such as helping families fax income and citizenship documents to Florida KidCare.

## Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida *Continued*

### Next Steps

While setting up the school-based outreach project, Lee Memorial is still working to incorporate Florida KidCare application assistance into the emergency room of the hospital. The project has been able to show the hospital administration that Florida KidCare outreach has been profitable. Families can go to their regular doctor instead of the emergency room, a benefit for the hospital as well as the family. Therefore, the hospital administration has elected to set up Florida KidCare application/renewal assistance in all 4 of its hospitals. Additionally, the project has been working with their local United Way to reach families with uninsured children that may not have transportation to come into one of the hospitals or doesn't attend a Lee County District school. The goal for this collaboration is to work with and train United Way partners to become application/renewal assistance sites and/or set up a referral project much like Lee County Schools.



Kim Samuelson, Lee Memorial's Florida KidCare Coordinator says it is building a relationship with families that have had the greatest impact for the Florida KidCare outreach project:

*"Having a personal contact with the families has made a big difference; once you make a personal contact with families you then have a relationship - they trust you and want you to help - they see that it's for their benefit"*

The Florida Association of Children's Hospitals (2013) reports that Lee Memorial's Florida KidCare Outreach project has saved the hospital \$675,000 in just nine months. Additionally, since April 2011, Lee County's Florida KidCare non Medicaid enrollment (including Full Pay) has increased by 9% and the county's Medicaid enrollment for children 0 through 18 has increased by 11%. The next element to outreach that the hospital will be taking into its multi-prong approach will be business outreach.

## Limitless Florida KidCare Outreach Efforts

"When families are asked how they learned about Florida KidCare, the most common response is that they learned about the program from another family." (Florida Healthy Kids, Corporation, 2012) **But, how did that first family learn about Florida KidCare?** Was it:

- A child's school
- A community health fair
- A budgeting class
- An employer
- A waitress using a Florida KidCare pen
- The Lowry Park Zoo on \$5 family day
- A yellow ribbon event
- The emergency room
- The dentist
- Teens enacting a flash mob

In order to "carry out" a program that improves the health and well-being of families and children within a community, this program may need to be "carried to" the community, in the form of outreach (University of Kansas, 2013). The opportunities to reach families with uninsured children who may be eligible for Florida KidCare can be limitless when a multi-prong approach is applied to outreach strategies. The type and degree of outreach efforts depends upon the community. The utilization of different outreach activities bridges the gap between health care coverage and children.



**Credits**

Agency for Health Care Administration

Broward County Health Department

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Community Voices Healthcare for the Underserved

Economic and Social Research Institute

Florida Community Health Centers, Inc.

*Florida Covering Kids & Families*

Florida Department of Health,

Florida Impact

Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families

Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida

Ketchum

Lake Research Partners

Lawton & Rhea Chiles Center for Healthy Mothers & Babies

Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative

University of Kansas

U.S. Census

USF Health

