



Georgetown University Health Policy Institute

Center for Children and Families

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**The Number of Uninsured Children Hits New High
*Latest Data Underscore Importance of a Strong SCHIP Reauthorization***

WASHINGTON -- After years of success in covering more of America's children, new Census Bureau data released today show that the number of uninsured children has increased for the second consecutive year and has hit a new high, according to the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families.

In 2006, the number of uninsured children under 18 increased by 611,000 to 8.7 million. As a result, there now are more uninsured children in the United States than there are all children in Texas and Virginia combined.

“This increase in the number of uninsured children is twice as large as last year's jump and means that we now have more children without coverage than at any point since the turn of the century,” said Jocelyn Guyer, CCF's deputy executive director.

The increase in the number of uninsured children is part of the larger trend of Americans finding it harder than ever to secure affordable coverage through their jobs. Among all Americans, the number of uninsured increased from 44.8 million to 47 million as employer-based coverage continued to decline.

The new Census numbers underscore the urgent need for a strong reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program. Both the House and Senate SCHIP reauthorization bills -- which are now in conference -- provide states with new funding and tools to cover more uninsured children. The House bill goes the furthest, providing nearly \$50 billion in new funding for SCHIP and Medicaid, and would result in an estimated 5 million more children securing coverage.

“Today’s sobering news should set off alarm bells in the halls of Congress and in the Oval Office signaling that we need to redouble our efforts to ensure that America’s families have access to affordable health insurance,” said Cindy Mann, executive director of the Center for Children and Families. “It also is a striking signal,” said Mann, “that the administration’s controversial new directive barring states from covering children with modest family incomes moves in exactly the wrong direction at the wrong time.”

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The Center for Children and Families (CCF) is an independent, nonpartisan policy center based at Georgetown University’s Health Policy Institute whose mission is to expand and improve health coverage for America’s children and families. For additional information on SCHIP reauthorization, visit Center for Children and Families’ Web site at <http://ccf.georgetown.edu>.