

## **New Georgetown University Report: Alarming 23% Increase in Number of Uninsured Babies, Toddlers and Preschoolers Signals Need to Improve Access to Medicaid and CHIP**

A [new report](#) published by the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families (CCF) found the uninsured rate for young children (under age 6) has hit the highest rate in nearly a decade and is rising more sharply than for older children (6-18). Between 2022 and 2024, the share of young children under age 6 who were uninsured increased by a full percentage point, from 4.3 to 5.3 percent. Nearly 220,000 additional babies, toddlers and preschool aged children were uninsured in 2024 – a 23% increase between 2022 and 2024.

During a press call, the Georgetown University researchers said the report should serve as a wake-up call for state and national policymakers to act now before the situation gets even more dire for children.

“This report identifies an alarming reversal in progress that had been made on child health coverage in the past decade,” said Elisabeth Burak, senior fellow at Georgetown CCF and lead author of the report. “It is likely a harbinger of what’s to come unless our nation’s leaders make a dramatic course correction.”

The report includes state-by-state data showing the following:

- Texas (10.8%), North Dakota (9.8%), Arizona (9.0%), Wyoming (8.5%), Idaho (7.9%), Arkansas (7.6%), Florida (7.6%), and Oklahoma (7.5%) had the highest rates of uninsured children under 6 in 2024.
- The percentage growth in the number of uninsured children under age 6 between 2022-2024 outpaced the growth among school-aged children in the U.S. and in nine states: Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Florida, Kansas, Missouri, North Dakota, Texas, West Virginia.
- The increased number of uninsured children under age 6 in three large states (Texas, Florida, and Georgia) accounted for more than half of the national increase.
- Uninsured rates were higher for young children of color. American Indian and Alaska Native children under age 6 have the highest rate of uninsurance of any racial or ethnic group (10.5%) nationally.

Matthew Biel, MD, MSc – director of the Georgetown University Thrive Center for Children, Families, and Communities – said the loss of health coverage is extremely harmful to young children. “Young children in the first few years of life require frequent visits to the doctor to support healthy physical and mental development,” said Biel. “Access to health care is especially important for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children. When children can’t access the care they need during those early years, they are at higher risk of falling behind developmentally. Health coverage is essential to supporting healthy child development so all that all children can thrive.”

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that one additional year of Medicaid continuous coverage in childhood improves labor outcomes in adulthood including higher earnings, hours worked, and labor productivity.

Most uninsured children are eligible for Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) but not enrolled due to red tape barriers or punitive policies that discourage families from signing their children up for health coverage. This trend is likely to worsen as the Trump Administration adds more red tape barriers to Medicaid and scales back on state options to provide young children with multi-year continuous health coverage.

"As we release this report today, the number of children enrolled in Medicaid has been declining rapidly in the last year, which means that the child uninsured rate is likely even higher today than when this data was collected," said Joan Alker, executive director of the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families. "Our nation's leaders must stop paying lip service to children's health and start taking action to reverse this trend. More uninsured babies and toddlers is terrible news for their health, the future of the country and the rising costs that young families face. "

A previous report by Georgetown CCF focused on health coverage trends for children of all ages. The [analysis](#) released last fall, found the uninsured rate for children of all ages increased from 5.1% to 6% between 2022 and 2024, which is also the highest rate in nearly a decade.

Georgetown CCF also publishes a child Medicaid/CHIP enrollment [tracker](#) that has recorded 2 million fewer children enrolled in Medicaid/CHIP since January 2025. State-by-state Medicaid/CHIP enrollment is also available on the tracker.

*The data analysis is based on U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). Further state-by-state data and policy can be found on the [Georgetown University Child Health Report](#). The Center for Children and Families is a non-partisan research center based at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy.*