

## **New Healthy Kids program for uninsured Riverside County children starts**

**RIVERSIDE, CA** . . . Riverside County officials will extend low-cost medical, dental and vision care to thousands of children who do not qualify for state Medi-Cal and Healthy Families programs. The new program, called Healthy Kids, is now available.

“This program focuses resources among the neediest children,” Riverside County Supervisor Bob Buster said. “It is especially satisfying to bridge a gap that kept some children from receiving the care that every child needs.”

Riverside County joins San Francisco, Santa Clara, and San Mateo (in 2003) counties in implementing a Healthy Kids Initiative to extend health care to uninsured children.

The program was bankrolled with \$2.5 million a year from the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, \$2 million from the Children and Families Commission, \$1 million from IEHP and \$300,000 from Community Health Corp. The partnership hopes to attract even more money to expand coverage as the program develops.

In Riverside County, more than 13,000 children and young adults up to age 19 have no health insurance. Healthy Kids will have the capacity to protect more than 6,000 of them.

The collaboration among Riverside County, the Riverside County Children and Families Commission, Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP) and Community Health Corp. drew praise from Dr. Gary Feldman, director of the county’s Community Health Agency.

“In the absence of federal and state solutions, the only answer that makes sense is taking local responsibility,” said Feldman, who chairs the Children and Families Commission.

"The Riverside County Children and Families Commission is proud to help found an innovative program that provides critical health care for the very young," said Carolyn Wylie, the commission's executive director. The commission uses Prop.10 money for programs that help children under age 6.

"Families are struggling to meet the most basic needs, from prenatal care to health care for children approaching school age. This unique program provides a seamless system of care for most children who have no health insurance," said Wylie.

Healthy Kids offers comprehensive health, dental and vision insurance to Riverside County children whose family income is less than 250% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and who do not meet the requirements for either Medi-Cal or the recently launched Healthy Families Program.

"We're very excited about the new Healthy Kids program," said Mark Williams, president and CEO of Community Health Corp. "It gives us an opportunity to provide insurance for children who otherwise would not have access to health care insurance, which is actually part of our mission."

IEHP will provide medical, dental and vision care for Healthy Kids and handle enrollment processing.

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**Healthy Kids**

**Pg. 3 of 4**

"If you've been turned down for health insurance in the past or if you didn't apply because you thought your child would not meet residency requirements, Healthy Kids may be just what you've been waiting for," declared IEHP CEO Richard Bruno. "We hope Riverside County parents who want to give their children access to top-quality medical, dental and vision services will give us a call and see how easy it is to qualify for Healthy Kids."

"We've tried to make it very easy for Riverside County families to apply, qualify, and pay for Healthy Kids," said Bruno. He cited several Healthy Kids features designed to encourage parents to insure their children:

- A child must reside in Riverside County for the past 90 days. Family income limits are the same as those for Healthy Families and Medi-Cal.
- Once qualified, there is an annual Family Application Fee of either \$5 or \$20, depending on the Doctor selected.
- No monthly premiums. One low Family Application Fee covers all children in a family household for one year, no matter how many are enrolled.
- All Healthy Kids medical and vision services are either FREE or require only a \$5 co-payment. Dental services are either FREE or require a \$5 or, in some cases, \$10 co-payment.
- Riverside residents can apply for Healthy Kids by phone. IEHP will answer all questions and fill out the application on the phone. Call IEHP toll free at 1-866-294-IEHP (4347) and ask about Healthy Kids.
- Applications are reviewed and approved locally for Healthy Kids. That means IEHP can usually have a child insured within 10 days after an application is approved.

Healthy Kids takes care of a child's most important health needs at minimal cost –

- Members pay \$0 co-payment for: ALL Hospital Care, Well-Child Doctor Visits, Immunizations, Emergency Ambulance, Prenatal and Postnatal Care.
- Members pay \$5 co-payment for: Emergency Room Care, Doctor's Office Visits, some Dental Exams, Prescription Medicine, Vision Exams, Frames and Lenses

Riverside County families may call 1-866-294-IEHP (4347) toll free to get complete information about Healthy Kids.

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