

NEWS RELEASE



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Healthy Kids halfway to goal of enrolling 80,000 more Oregon kids on health care

Healthy Kids, Oregon's newly expanded health coverage program for uninsured children, recently passed an important milestone: the halfway mark toward the goal of enrolling 80,000 more children by the end of this year.

As of March, 41,750 more Oregon children have been enrolled in Healthy Kids since the program expanded last summer, thanks to legislation passed by the 2009 Legislature and championed by Governor Kulongoski. In Deschutes County 2,053 more kids now have health coverage through Healthy Kids.

"It's exciting to see that our outreach efforts are paying off and, as a result, 41,750 more Oregon children can see a doctor when they need to," said Cathy Kaufmann, the Administrator of the State's new Office of Healthy Kids, which is part of the Oregon Health Authority.

The Office of Healthy Kids is working closely with local community organizations statewide to help spread the word about Healthy Kids to families with uninsured children. Healthy Beginnings and Mountain Star Family Relief Nursery are the Healthy Kids grantees working to enroll kids in Deschutes county.

"There is still work left to do," said Holly Remer of Healthy Beginnings. "In Deschutes County alone, there are 6,573 uninsured kids. As the recession continues to squeeze Oregon families, it is important that we focus on finishing the job by enrolling all eligible children."

Healthy Kids covers all the care kids need, including regular check-ups, prescriptions, dental, vision, mental and behavioral health care. The program is open to any uninsured child legally residing in Oregon. No child will be turned away because of a pre-existing condition and coverage options are available to families at every income level.

Families with incomes at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (around \$44,100 for a family of four) qualify for free coverage for their children, while families with incomes between 200 and 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (up to about \$66,000 for a family of four) will pay a small portion (10-15 percent) of the premium.

Families who exceed this income limit may buy into the program at full cost. No child will be turned away because of a pre-existing condition.

Families with uninsured children should apply for Healthy Kids today by calling 1-877-314-5678 or online at www.oregonhealthykids.gov. In Deschutes County and surrounding communities, families can turn to either Healthy Beginnings or MountainStar Family Relief Nursery to receive in-person assistance in applying for the

program. Families interested in applying can call Healthy Beginnings at 541-383-6357 or visit their website at www.myhb.org. MountainStar can be reached at 541-322-6820 or www.mountainstarfamily.org.

Both organizations, along with Mosaic Medical, Partnership to End Poverty, Healthmatters and NeighborImpact, will be on hand to assist families at the Healthy Kids Connect Enrollment Event and Health Fair on Saturday, May 8 from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. scheduled for the Deschutes County Expo Center – South Sisters Building. Detailed information regarding this event is available at www.myhb.org.