Issue Brief



February 20, 2017

Children's Health Insurance

Having health insurance means that children can receive the care they need to develop and thrive. Despite strides made toward ensuring kids are covered, many remain without health insurance in our state.

- In Multnomah County, more than 10% of the children we serve in our School Based Health Centers, Dental Clinics, and Primary Care Clinics are uninsured. That's about 3,000 kids.
- In 2014, 18% of Oregonians of color lacked health insurance compared to 8% of non-Hispanic whites (1).
- Access to health insurance reduces cost barriers for families and helps kids access the care they need (2, 3).

Healthy Kids Learn Better!



Participation in children's health insurance programs leads to lower student absenteeism and improved attendance (4). Low-income children with health insurance are more likely to graduate from high school and from college and have better health as teenagers (5).

1. Oregon Health Equity Alliance, "Mend the Gap: Why Full Coverage Makes Sense for Oregon" (2015)

2. Starfield B and Shi L "The Medical Home, Access to Care, and Insurance: A Review of Evidence" *Pediatrics* 113, No 5 (May 2004).

3. Dick A, Brach C, Allison A, Shenkman E et al "SCHIP's Impact In Three States: How Do The Most Vulnerable Children Fare? *Health Affairs*, 23 no. 5 (2004)

5. Cohodes, S., et al., "The Effect of Child Health Insurance Access on Schooling: Evidence from Public Insurance Expansions," National Bureau of Economic Research (2014)



Pictured: one of the young patients of Dr. Amy Henninger, Deputy Medical Director and family physician at East County Health Center. Dr. Henninger says, "When kids have coverage, they come in for preventative care. This allows us to address all of their health needs and prepare them for success into adulthood."

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^{4.} Yeung, R. et al., "Can Health Insurance Reduce School Absenteeism?," Education and Urban Society (2011)