Promising Practices:
Ohio Covering Kids & Families
Covering Kids & Families is a project of the Children’s Defense Fund–Ohio, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation with direction from the Southern Institute on Children and Families.

Children's Defense Fund Ohio works to Leave No Child Behind® and to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities by providing a strong, effective voice for all the children of America who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves.
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Letter from the Director

Ronald Browder

It is hard to believe that 4 years of hard work in assuring healthcare coverage for Ohio's children and families are coming to a close. Looking back, it has been an honor to be a participating member of Robert Wood Johnson’s Covering Kids & Families Initiative, and valiantly addressing an issue vital to our children & families’ well-being.

Through the years the Ohio Covering Kids & Families Coalition and local projects have experienced an array of successes in facilitating coverage for uninsured individuals and families. Looking specifically at outreach, coordination, and simplification, we are excited to share with you just a few of the practices that we found to be promising in providing children and families with healthcare coverage.

As you will notice in the following pages, some of the smallest changes made the biggest difference. You will read true stories of success achieved through Ohio Covering Kids & Families initiatives & projects. A young mother receives healthcare coverage for her newborn. A single father is awarded assistance for his daughter, relieving the stress of worry he once knew daily. Regardless if an initiative was challenging or effortless, huge or miniscule, simple or complex - there was always a profound effect on the lives our initiatives touched.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank all of the individuals and organizations who participated in Covering Kids & Families initiatives and projects. Your time, energy, and commitment to insuring Ohio’s children and families are certainly appreciated. Thank you!

Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio looks forward to continuing our initiatives by expanding our experiences and increasing opportunities to provide more coverage for children and families.

Sincerely,
Ronald R. Browder
Director
Children’s Defense Fund- Ohio
Forward: Berna Bell
Chair, Ohio Covering Kids & Families Coalition

The critically important work of enrolling uninsured children and low-income parents with available health care coverage has made progress in Ohio, thanks to a dedicated group of volunteers, funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and support by the Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio.

During the past four years, this statewide coalition of volunteers provided strategic direction and oversight for Ohio’s Covering Kids and Families initiative. The project built upon work started in 1997 to help families access and understand both the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Medicaid.

Three principal prongs for this work have emerged:
- Outreach to children and families eligible for coverage
- Simplification of administrative procedures for enrollment
- Coordination of resources for efficient enrollment

Local pilot project sites in Southwest Ohio and Toledo, Ohio, implemented outreach, simplification, and coordination projects under a similar operational and governing structure.

Although Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funding for this coalition will soon come to an end, the Ohio Coalition for Covering Kids and Families is confident new support will be secured to continue the essential work of ensuring coverage for all uninsured children and low-income parents.

The following pages represent some of what we have learned over the past four years about outreach, simplification, and coordination. These promising practices will prove invaluable as we look to the future and plan the work ahead. I invite you to join us.

Berna L. Bell
Berna L. Bell
Chair– Ohio Covering Kid & Families Coalition
Healthy Start
Healthy Families
Child & Family Health Insurance Options
Healthy Start & Healthy Families (HSHF) are two components of Ohio’s health plan that improve the quality of life for qualified children, families, and pregnant women throughout the state’s 88 counties. They encompass both Medicaid, as well as the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to meet the medical and health needs of over 1 million Ohio citizens.

HSHF programs serve:
1. Children 19 or younger, up to 200% FPL
2. Pregnant women up to 150% FPL
3. Parents/Guardians up to 90% FPL

To Qualify, HSHF recipients must:
- Be a US citizen/meet Medicaid Citizenship Requirement
- Be an Ohio resident
- Have/obtain a Social Security Number
- Meet specific financial requirements stated above

During the year 2005 Ohio spent about $10.4 billion in state and Federal funds providing quality healthcare to Medicaid recipients, including 1 million children and 490,000 low income parents, and pregnant women. Although great strides have been made in making healthcare coverage accessible, there remain over 150,000 people who are eligible but not enrolled in Ohio’s Healthy Start Healthy Families program.

As of June 2005, the monthly average caseload in Ohio for Healthy Start Healthy Families was 1,283,466 consumers.  

*http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/consumers/benefits.stm

1 Ohio Department of Job and Family Services 2005 Annual Report: Ohio Health Plans
Ohio’s Statewide Covering Kids & Families Coalition

Who We Are:
Ohio Covering Kids and Families is statewide coalition to ensure that all children and families eligible for Medicaid and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) are enrolled. Covering Kids & Families is a national initiative supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation with direction provided by the Southern Institute on Children and Families.

Our Goal:
Raise awareness and work to reduce the number of uninsured children and parents in the state of Ohio.

Our Strategies:
Ohio Covering Kids & Families strategies have been multi-faceted and include conducting outreach and enrollment activities targeting eligible families, developing and implementing programs to simplify the enrollment and re-enrollment processes, and coordinating public healthcare coverage programs within service providers, schools, non-profit entities and county Departments of Jobs & Family Services so that families can access the services that they are eligible to receive.

Our Partners:
Action for Children, Buckeye Community Health Plan, Catholic Conference of Ohio, Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio, Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, Clermont Mercy Foundation, Columbus Children’s Hospital Medical Center, Columbus Health Department, Columbus Neighborhood Health Centers Inc., Communities in Schools, Cuyahoga County Department of Job & Family Services, Franklin County Department of Jobs & Family Services, Hamilton County Department of Jobs & Family Services, Hamilton County Educational Service Center Head Start, Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati, Mahoning County Department of Job & Family Services, Mount Carmel Health Systems, Neighborhood Health Association, Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association, Ohio Children’s Hospital Association, Ohio Commission on Minority Health, Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, Ohio Head Start Association, Inc., Ohio Hospital Association, Ohio Primary Care Association, Ohio United Way, The Ohio State University Medical Center, Toledo Neighborhood Health Association, United Somali Refugee Women, Universal Health Care Action Network of Ohio, and Voices for Children of Greater Cleveland.
What We Do:
Ohio CKF Coalition is organized by the Children’s Defense-Ohio, which serves as the lead agency, managing a statewide coalition and assisting with local efforts throughout the state.

The Toledo Local Project, led by the Neighborhood Health Association (NHA) of Toledo, is working to increase public healthcare coverage among eligible Hispanic/Latino children and families. They work to address these areas on both a local and statewide level by providing outreach services to the community, identifying barriers to enrollment and renewal processes and making recommendations for possible solutions.

The Southwest Ohio Local Project, led by the Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati, is working with local businesses to educate employers and employees about public healthcare coverage. They are creating inter-system partnerships through conferences, meetings and events to facilitate collaboration with health centers, school nurses, and faith-based groups which enhances awareness of existing health coverage programs, and provides enrollment and renewal information.

Ohio Covering Kids and Families Successes
Under the direction of Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio, the coalition achieved a multitude of successes. Specifically, CDF developed the Healthy Start and Healthy Families tool kit to educate partners about available public health coverage programs and to assist families in the enrollment process. Over 200 individuals (hospital employees, social workers, nurses, and community based outreach workers) from across the state were trained to provide enrollment and renewal information. These practices educated employers, citizens, and medical professionals about the Healthy Start Healthy Families program, as well as provided them with further details on enrollment, their rights, and responsibilities. Furthermore, CDF and the CKF coalition advocated to simplify the Healthy Start and Healthy Families joint application form and to create pre-populated renewal forms, as well as to maintain the availability of adult public health coverage.

Ohio CKF efforts have contributed to the overall decrease in the children’s uninsured rate from 9.8% in 1998 to 5.4% in 2004. However, there is still work to be done to reach over 100,000 eligible but non-enrolled Ohio children.
Ohio Covering Kids & Families Coalition

Promising Practices

A focus on Outreach, Coordination & Simplification
Outreach is essential in helping Ohio’s kids and families receive free or low-cost health insurance. Without the significant outreach efforts of our coalition, thousands of children simply would not have any health care coverage today. Although the Ohio Covering Kids & Families Coalition has made tremendous strides in connecting uninsured kids and families to health insurance, there remain over 100,000 uninsured youth who are eligible for free or low-cost health care coverage.
Franklin County Department of Jobs and Family Services
Medicaid Outreach Initiative

Although thousands of children were provided health care by Healthy Start Healthy Families in Franklin County, Ohio, there were thousands more who qualified for the program, yet were not enrolled. This initiative was established to assure all poor children, pregnant women, and families who were qualified were receiving services.

The Medicaid Outreach initiative worked to maximize accessibility of Medicaid through the application and enrollment process, as well as to connect with the “hardest to reach” eligible population through creative communication and outreach strategies. Likewise, it was decided that customer service must be the guiding principle behind the design and implementation of activities.

Agencies Involved
• Franklin Country Department of Job & Family Services
• Businesses employing large numbers of minimum wage employees

Results
• Implemented a direct marketing/outreach plan to maintain awareness
• Created new, stand-alone Medicaid/Childcare application offices within 5 FCDJFS Community Opportunity Centers
• Implemented comprehensive quarterly training to staff on eligibility and Medicaid news
• Implemented a telephone hotline to facilitate greater accessibility for clients
• Provided outreach and account management services modeled after the private insurance industry.
• Provided specific services for HSHF retention modeled like the private insurance industry focusing on follow-up and customer service
This work group developed as a monthly meeting among key stakeholders in the Covering Kids & Families Coalition. A team of professionals met to identify and coordinate ideas to increase participation of Ohio children in Healthy Start. Strategies included working with the Free and Reduced School Lunch programs, targeting specific school personnel for information initiatives, selecting specific school events as avenues to enroll and share vital information straightforwardly to parents, and finding ways in which schools provide an avenue to share information and register as many children as possible. This work group worked under the premise that: schools are where the children are; school staff see problems first; schools may already be providing health services; and schools are often trusted institutions.

Agencies Involved

- Ohio Dept of Human Services
- Ohio Dept of Health
- Ohio Dept of Education
- Staff & Teachers in Hamilton County and Hocking County

Results

- Created successful and effective information sharing opportunities and materials
- Provided school personnel with HSHF resources
- Created and implemented an efficient endorsement strategy
Working together, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Covering Kids staff & H&R Block representatives saw a unique and effective avenue to reach uninsured children and families. H&R Block, serving millions of taxpayers, had the ability to serve as a crucial link to health care coverage by identifying families who were potentially eligible for Healthy Start Healthy Families. H&R Block educated them about the program.

Utilizing the company’s ‘Just For You’ financial advice form, clients were made aware of the availability of free or low-cost health care coverage available through Healthy Start Healthy Families.

**Results**

Clients who received services from an H&R Block office who earned $35,000 per year or less, and had children younger than 19 received a message and contact information so they can obtain further details about the HSHF programs they were potentially qualified for.
Hamilton County HSHF Outreach Program

Hamilton County HSHF success stems from activities and efforts, including:
- A Helpline phone center
- Field representatives attending school/community events
- In-Reach Specialist at hospitals/clinics in county
- Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati School-based Student Health Center Project: A special initiative targeting eligible & interested families to assist them in obtaining healthcare benefits in school student health centers
- School Lunch Program Application Outreach: Contacted families participating in the school lunch program about enrolling in HSHF healthcare benefits
- Business/Franchisee Initiative: Contacting employers and businesses about reaching their employees about the HSHF program
- School Survey Project: Surveys were distributed through schools to parents to gather information about their insurance status to capture uninsured families for marketing of the HSHF program
- Head Start: Training Head Start staff about HSHF and assisting families in applying for medical coverage
- Hispanic/Latino Collaborative: Health and social service providers collaborated to address the Hispanic/Latino population specifically, especially in regards to health issues

Agencies Involved
- Automated Health Systems
- Hamilton County Job & Family Services
- Cincinnati Public Schools
- Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati
- Children’s Defense Fund– Ohio
- Covering Kids & Families Staff

Results
Established multiple points of contact to ensure enrollment information was disseminated across the community.
This program was a valuable vehicle for HSHF education and referral. Each quarter 200 packets were prepared for newborn visits and each packet contained HSHF brochures, bookmarks, business cards, pencils, Baby Packets, and *HealthCheck* brochures. Upon making a Help Me Grow visit to deliver the materials, nurses also educated parents on the HSHF program, answered any questions that they had, as well as offered assistance with HSHF Application completion.

Training for the nurse visitors was ongoing and they received multi-faceted information and resources about the HSHF program, application, and answers to the most commonly asked questions. Nurses were well equipped with all tools and resources they needed in assisting a mother and her newborn child.

The Mahoning County: Help Me Grow initiative was very useful in providing parents education and resources about the HSHF program and its benefits.

### Agencies Involved
- Mahoning County Department of Job & Family Services
- Help Me Grow
- Mahoning County Family & Children First

### Results
The number of new parents seen during the first 3 months of Help Me Grow Newborn Visitation was 250. 64 of these visits lead to parents being assisted with HSHF applications. Help Me Grow has seen an increase in program participation and it is anticipated that these numbers will continue to increase.
Mahoning County: 100% Schools Project

The 100% School Project was created after partnerships with the school lunch program, nurses, teachers and administrators highlighted the need for all children in schools to have health care coverage.

This shared goal helped participants design and implement a pilot project that was the first in Mahoning County, and possibly the first for the state. By working together with extensive outreach and collaboration, the initiative sought to be sure all students had some sort of health care coverage. The project continued to be refined and individualized to the needs of each school.

There were 2 elementary schools, one middle school, and 2 high schools who participated in the program.

During the implementation of this program, school nurses also received further training with updated information about the HSHF program.

Agencies Involved

- Local School Systems, including Nurses Teachers Principals
- Mahoning County Department of Job & Family Services

Results

Through outreach efforts at participating schools, the parents of over 1,100 students received Health Start Healthy Family information, and assistance was available in Spanish for outreach to Spanish speaking families.
This project promoted the availability of Healthy Start to potentially eligible new families through various advertising and outreach activities that reached identified populations.

A focus was geared to increase the number of children nineteen and under enrolled in Healthy Start by expanding program awareness among new service groups to generate calls to the Healthy Start Hotline and Healthy Start applications sent from the Hotline.

In order to implement the foci above, Cuyahoga County hired a communications firm that developed and implemented an aggressive, multimedia marketing campaign to promote Healthy Start and created ambassadors.

**Agencies Involved**

- Cuyahoga County Employment and Family Services
- Metrohealth Medical Center – Healthy Start Hotline
- ADCOM Communications, Inc.

**Results**

- Used radio to gain widespread interest in target specific audiences
- Created Healthy Start website connecting to existing EFS/HS link and Virtual Neighborhood Family Service Center Healthy Start online application program
- Advertised in targeted newspapers, billboards in targeted areas, on transit reminder/frequency messages and directional way-finding kiosks in the City of Cleveland
- Directed mailings to business owners, schools, faith-base groups, public officials, community health clinics, community organizations and service providers
Cuyahoga County: Neighborhood Outreach Initiative

This component of Cuyahoga County’s programs formulated outreach activities focused on high need areas by neighborhoods and zip codes, and widened the outreach base to markets that employ workers in the discount retailers, fast-food chains, temporary employment agencies, nursing/assisted living settings and hospitality services.

It also developed and implemented targeted outreach activities to assure that all eligible families had access to healthcare and created community benefits outreach presentations with a Healthy Start focus inclusive of the enrollment process. Presentations were modified to meet the needs of the audience. An exciting component was the incorporation of the enrollment process as part of the outreach activities by integrating the virtual Healthy Start online application.

Agencies Involved

- Cuyahoga County Employment & Family Services
- Metrohealth Medical Center – Healthy Start Hotline
- Cuyahoga County Board of Health
- Invest In Children
- Help Me Grow
- City of Cleveland Department of Health – Mom’s First Program

Results

- Researched the “who” and “where” potential eligible families congregating
- Created a presentation and materials
- Got the word out by mailings, presentations, and networking with new groups
- Online enrollment of Healthy Start followed group presentations when available
Haven’t we all wondered why some processes are so complex? Insurance forms and applications for medical benefits are often difficult to understand, and the information required duplicates what has been provided to enroll in other programs. These complexities create a barrier to accessing needed care. Ohio’s Covering Kids and Families Coalition examined ways to make the Healthy Start and Healthy Families application and reapplication processes simpler for both beneficiaries and providers.
Thousands of eligible families do not apply for Healthy Start Healthy Families each year simply because they are already overwhelmed with the amount of paperwork necessary to receive other vital programs. However, with the addition of a simple addendum to the Child Care Application, the process for receiving Healthy Start Healthy Families along with child care assistance became much easier. Now applicants only have to complete a short additional form to apply for medical insurance rather than completing another entire, separate application.

In order to implement this project, participating agencies first researched other states’ practices and explored interest in the community for a simpler process. Next a meeting was convened with interested agencies where they defined a common goal which ultimately lead to the designing of a one page addendum. Participating agencies then pilot tested the one page addendum and gathered consumer feedback, as well as feedback from necessary officials. After changes to the addendum were made based on feedback received, the group submitted it to the Child Care & Development Bureau for its approval and clearance process. Lastly, an implementation plan was developed and carried out.

Agencies Involved
- Office of Ohio Health Plans
- County Medicaid Offices
- Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio
- Child Care & Development Bureau
- Legal Aid Society
- Advocates for Basic Legal Equality

Results
There are counties in Ohio that are utilizing the simple addendum to enroll qualified children and families in Healthy Start Healthy Families.
The Kaiser Commission released a study that revealed that 72% of parents who were interviewed indicated that providing required documentation for health care coverage programs was too difficult. Cuyahoga County then took initiative to address this issue.

A self-declaration pilot-project was instituted so that families no longer needed to provide documentation verifying income to receive Healthy Start. By self-declaration people could fill out their application without providing specific documentation about income, and the Department of Job & Family Services verified income.

In a series of focus groups, participants stated they preferred self-declaration over income verification because the process was easier, and the concept that their word was believed was also important to them.

Furthermore, caseworkers also reported that self-declaration enabled them to process applications in a more timely manner, even with increasing caseloads.

Additionally, a Healthy Start Hotline assisted applicants with the application and this contributed to increased volume of applications.

### Agencies Involved
- Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
- Cuyahoga Health & Nutrition
- Cuyahoga Work & Training
- Penn & Associates, L.L.C.

### Results
- Income Self-declaration contributed to at least 24,000 children receiving benefits.
- Approval rates increased from 65% to 85%.
- Processing times went from 30-60 to 14-30 days.
- Project reveals that self-declaration has a 98% accuracy rate. In fact, 2%-9% of applicants overstated their income.

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1. Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured
2. Income Self-Declaration Boosts Enrollment for HSHF. Penn, Catherine & Staib, Robert. Cuyahoga Health & Nutrition Project #: 11P-91269/5-01
Utilizing PDSA (Plan Do Study Act) testing, a collaborative team studied the rate of Medicaid renewal, rate of returned mail, call volume and type, and flow of paper within the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services. Forms and applications were reviewed in order to make the renewal process much smoother, and more efficient. The mission was to reduce the number of terminations and denials by 10% from January through June 2006.

**PDSA #1**
- Received incomplete renewal applications
- Found that HSHF clients have difficulty understanding form
- Revised application follow-up forms for easier reading

**PDSA #2**
- Opportunity Center received returned mail
- Studied frequency and reasons of returned mail
- Instituted 'C.A.R.' - Customer Address Reminder: Reminder to verify address at every customer contact

**PDSA #3**
- Maintained high volume of calls at Opportunity Center
- Monitored volume & reasons for calls
- Found CRIS-E approval/denial notice to be problematic
- Requested revision of CRIS-E notice

**PDSA #4**
- Renewal applications were never returned
- Researched reasons for issue— contacted clients
- Tracking by supervisor lead to better monitoring procedures and facilitated improved quality control methods

### Agencies Involved
- Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
- Franklin County Department of Job & Family Services
- Children’s Defense Fund– Ohio

### Results
- Forms were edited and made easier to read; the frequency of returned mail was reduced; The State’s Client Registry Information System-Enhanced (CRIS-E) was revised, reducing the volume of phone calls at Opportunity Centers; and better quality control methods were established to monitor applications never returned.
- Initiatives were instituted for continuous improvement in data gathering, CRIS-E notices, and compliance.
Physicians from the Columbus Medical Association Physicians Free Clinic identified an issue they were experiencing serving individuals who recently immigrated. Many immigrants did not know their complete address and other identifying or contact information. This made completing records and forms impossible and left physicians without any contact information to reach patients regarding test results or other follow up information. With input from the Latino Empowerment Outreach Network Health Committee and Columbus Medical Association physicians, a bilingual, business card sized tool was created that can be filled out and carried by recent immigrants to assist them in completing documents and ensuring an avenue for communication exists after treatment.

### Agencies Involved
- Columbus Medical Association
- Latino Empowerment Outreach Network
- Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio

### Results
5,000 cards were distributed to Columbus Medical Association and Latino Empowerment Outreach Network workers to share with clients & customers.
By working together, agencies and community entities can effect change and offer hope. Resources become shared and better utilized, and fundamental partnerships are created by striving together to achieve a common goal. Some say it takes a village to raise a child… but it takes coordination of multifaceted resources to equip a child with health care coverage.
Legal Aid of Greater Cincinnati created and lead the Southwest Ohio Covering Kids & Families Coalition Pilot Project mobilizing Hamilton, Butler, Clermont, Brown, and Adams County residents in the Covering Kids and Families project. There were approximately 350,000 children in the Southwest Ohio pilot program area and close to 30,000 of these children are uninsured.

Southwest Ohio Pilot Program initiatives include:

**Employer Outreach**
- Conducted on-site presentations
- Focused efforts to institutionalize the education of employees

**Signing Up Parents**
- Reached parents through employer outreach
- Encouraged outreach workers to screen parents more carefully for eligibility
- Family focused marketing messages

**Cultural Competency**
- Used baseline data to design outreach to ethnic populations
- Partnered with agencies that have the trust of ethnic groups
- Monitored hospitals/providers Limited English Proficiency issues
- Built efforts to reduce cultural barriers

**Simplify Enrollment & Renewal Processes**
- Facilitated monthly CDJFS reviews
- Implemented enrollment audits
- Monitored enrollment & retention

**Coordination of Existing Healthcare Coverage**
- Worked to make HSHF categories seamless for customers
- Implemented Southwester Ohio Community Access project

**Agencies Involved**
- Hamilton County Department of Job & Family services
- Butler County Department of Job & Family Services
- Clermont County Department of Job & Family Services
- Automated Health Systems
- Southern Ohio Health Services Network
- Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati
- SC Ministry Foundation
- Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati
- Children’s Hospital Medical Center
- Babies Milk Fund
- Lincoln Heights Healthcare Connection
- Mercy Health Partners
Established relationship and referral process with the Cincinnati Public School nurses who had information about our local CKF hotline and parent helper service. When the nurse was in contact with a child that needed medical or dental services and was uninsured, s/he called the hotline to connect the family with advice about Medicaid or other services.

Coordinated an event with a local health center's self-pay population to provide 2 days of enrollment services, where customers came in and signed up for Medicaid.

Created the SW Ohio CKF Coalition and met bi-monthly with an active and vibrant membership that provided networking opportunities, a forum to share concerns and information, and a pool of concerned people from which we mobilized volunteers for events.

Implemented four consecutive annual 'Cover the Uninsured Week' weeks - most recently in 2006 featuring broad based marketing, a website, a hotline, phon-a-thons on 2 local television stations, a forum for audiences in the faith community, employers, policy-makers, and enrollment events at 12 Kroger stores.

Outstationed our enrollment services at the area's leading Hispanic service provider: Su Casa Hispanic Ministries, which allowed us to reach an underserved population, and informed our work on the obstacles and challenges facing the non-English speaking Medicaid consumer. Also formed a subcommittee of community service providers that advised us on ongoing challenges facing the LEP population.

Reached out to area employers to market the idea of including Medicaid as an option in each employer's health insurance delivery system - be it through open enrollment periods, payroll stuffers, employer health fairs, education materials, newsletters, etc.

Used information learned through CKF partnerships and facilitated enrollment to work with the Medicaid administrative agency and Managed Care Plans to review policies and improve services for Medicaid consumers overall. Met monthly with County Dept Job & Families Services Medicaid leaders to discuss Medicaid issues.

Marketeted and staffed a 5-day/week hotline for community partners, who called in to get answers to questions about helping families apply for Medicaid. This increased opportunities to build system capacity for enrolling people onto Medicaid.
The Neighborhood Health Association lead the Toledo Area Covering Kids & Families Pilot Project mobilizing Lucas County residents and agencies in the Covering Kids and Families program. Lucas County initiatives include:

**Conduct & Coordinate Outreach**
- Established point of service at initial clinic
- Integrated procedure into NHA network
- Developed procedures to access pertinent patient information
- Identified potentially eligible patients for HSHF
- Followed-up personally with patient
- Trained provider registration personnel on initial eligibility
- Patient on-site referral with HSHF application

**Latino Community Outreach**
- Worked with schools and agencies with high Latino population
- Attended cultural events reaching Latino children and parents
- Created bilingual & culturally related promotional items
- Worked with medical providers to enhance Latino services
- Developed relationships with Latino employers and businesses
- Possessed culturally competent bilingual staff
- Implemented bilingual hotline assistance
- Addressed “Fear of public charge” issue

**Simplification of Enrollment & Renewal**
- Reviewed process at the county level & tracked data
- Reviewed survey responses, complaints, & suggestions
- Developed relationship with LCDJFS to encourage simplification of enrollment & renewal
- Worked with county to insure that all application forms & re-certifications were available in Spanish
- Worked with LCDJFS to ensure 12 month coverage for children, regardless of parent coverage; timely newborn enrollment; & continuous coverage after postpartum period

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**Agencies Involved**
- Mercy Health Partners
- Paramount Advantage
- ProMedica Health System
- Medical University of Ohio
- Buckeye Community Health Plan
- Toledo Public Schools
- Toledo-Lucas County Health Department
- YMCA of Greater Toledo
- Lucas County Job & Family Services
- Care Net
- Dental Center of Northwest Ohio
- Automated Health System
- Advocates for Basic Legal Equality
- Love Inc.
- Aurora Gonzalez Community & Family Resource Center
Results

- Enrolled and educated Latino families using an outreach worker that did home visits. Many of these families may not have enrolled otherwise, since the language barrier and fear of public charge makes it hard to apply.
- By partnering with about 60 community agencies it became very easy for families to obtain an application. They didn’t have to go to JFS for one if they had any negative stigmas about the agency, or if they did not live near the agency.
- By working with the state CKF coalition and local Job & Family Services, a shortened and simplified application packet was created. Many families found the Job & Family Service application very long and daunting and may decided not to complete it.
- Created all forms and advertising in English and Spanish allowed us to reach more families, since there is not much bilingual information in the community.
- Created the Application Process Form and Application Tip Sheet (bilingual) made the application easier to complete for families.
- Created the CKF Toledo coalition and meeting monthly, created and maintained a list serve that allowed all the member agencies to get the most recently updated Medicaid information (income guidelines, welfare reform, changes in parental coverage, citizenship verification requirements, what other states are doing to make the Medicaid program easier to navigate, etc.) so they could give accurate info to their clients, attend relevant meetings and trainings, and get connected to other related causes.
- A bilingual outreach worker made it much easier to enroll non-citizen parents of citizen kids into the CareNet program. During home visits, the entire family is linked to some form of assistance for their health care needs and health bills, such as HCAP and AEMA.
- A dedicated HSHF hotline allowed clients to get their questions answered quickly and accurately, since it is sometimes difficult to get through to a worker at DJFS. The hotline allows the Neighborhood Health Association to give information about Healthy Start Healthy Families, and to refer families to other community resources.
- Collaboration with WTOL.com resulted in Healthy Start Healthy Families information in two locations on the website, which allowed us to reach more people than any other marketing tool we have used.
Ohio Covering Kids & Families Coalition: Employer Tool-Kit

Considering that employers play a tremendous role in healthcare coverage availability, it became vital to educate businesses and agencies about Healthy Start Healthy Families as a solution to employees' healthcare needs. A tool-kit was created to inform businesses and human resource departments of the Healthy Start Healthy Families option, emphasizing that health care coverage is expensive, therefore difficult to furnish for employees, and that Healthy Start Healthy Families is available to alleviate a gap in healthcare coverage created by the immense cost of employee coverage.

After the Employer Tool-Kit has been received and reviewed by businesses, they have the availability to gather further information from CKF partners.

Components of the Employer Tool-Kit included:
- How Health Impacts Worker Productivity
- The Rising Cost of Health Care
- How Medicaid Can Help You Control Costs
- Healthy Start Healthy Families Program & Enrollment Information
- Options for Educating Your Workforce
  * Open Enrollment
  * Payroll Stuffers
  * Part-time/Entry-Level Staff/New Hires
This initiative worked to establish cross systems collaborations to increase the capacity of enrolling new eligible children in Healthy Start. Specific collaborations were with Cuyahoga County of Board of Health – Food Preparation services and certificate program.

Collaboration was also instituted with Cleveland Clinic to issue a survey to assess the health care needs on Medicaid population in East Cleveland.

The county also collaborated with other organizations/agencies to establish new initiatives where “Train the Trainer” workshops can be held on community benefits/services.

**Agencies Involved**

- Cuyahoga County Employment & Family Services
- Cuyahoga County Employment & Family Services
- The Cleveland Clinic Foundation
- Cuyahoga County Women, Infant & Children

**Results**

- Trained sanitarium staff benefits and programs available to their clients and provide materials to them for distribution
- Executed 2 client mailings
- Executed community mailing
- Prepared curriculum
- Held training sessions
Health Partners of Miami County: School Physicals
Collaborating with Piqua Health Department, county school districts, Ohio State University Extension, and Miami County Job & Family Services, this event provided 100 physicals for school aged children who were identified and referred by their school. Along with other forms required to complete the procedure, Health Start Healthy Families information and applications were also distributed.

Ashland County Family & Children First Council: Back-to-School Family Fun Day
Along with the Ashland County Department of Job & Family Services, ACFCFC sponsored a family activity focused on health, safety, and positive family development. The event was targeted to promote Healthy Start Healthy Families enrollment by providing exciting activities for children while parents enrolled for health care coverage.

Columbia County Department of Job & Family Services: Elementary School Health Fair
A health fair was implemented involving numerous community programs and services for families as they began the new school year. During this event parents received information and application assistance with Healthy Start Healthy Families.

Family Advisory Council, Medina County Family First Council: Back-to-School Fair
A Back-to-School Fair was held for children and families living in the poorest area of the county. During this event families were connected with numerous programs within their area, as well as with Healthy Start Healthy Families health care coverage information.

New Beginnings Christian Community Revitalization Corp.: Covering Ohio Kids & Families Campaign
A collection of churches banded together for a multi-faceted campaign to connect children and families with health care coverage. Strategies used during this campaign included: outreach efforts at GINIKANWA Summer Day Camp, Hop-Skip-Jump, City of Refuge Learning Academy, First Church of God Daycare Center, the Annual Community Health, and Safety Festival and PSAs and paid radio commercials on radio stations. This grantee also created a billboard at a major intersection and distributed flyers promoting Healthy Start Healthy Families.
Norwood Church of the Nazarene: Back-to-School Bash Expansion—Health Services Area
This grantee utilized funds to expand an already existing back-to-school activity by adding a health services component to its event. This section highlighted Healthy Start Healthy Families and had representative from the Department of Jobs & Family Services to answer questions and assist parents with the application.

Pickaway County Health Department: Back-to-School Campaign
This initiative encompassed trained health professionals attending planned back-to-school events to distribute school supplies and educate families on Healthy Start Healthy Families. When distributing the supplies, representatives also informed parents of the health coverage option and assisted them in completing a application.

Short North Health & Wellness, Inc.: Back-to-School Event
Focusing on low income families, this project instituted an event for children and families in a familiar parking lot where free activities were held for the community’s enjoyment. During this time volunteers spoke with attendees about the Healthy Start Healthy Families option and distributed applications.

The Northwest Local School District: Back-to-School Health & Safety Fair
This fair was implemented to target 7 of 9 elementary schools in the district that received Title 1 and educated low-income students. A variety of services were offered, including: physical exams, sight & hearing tests, dental exams, immunizations, hair cuts, school supplies, and Healthy Start Healthy Family education and application assistance.

Youngstown Area Community Action Council: Back-to-School Fair
The Youngstown Area Community Action Council hosted a fair to inform citizens of community programs, specifically with Healthy Start Healthy Families information. During this day, the group also hosted a press conference about Healthy Start Healthy Families and provided basic health screenings for kids and adults.

Communities In Schools (CIS): Magnet Outreach
CIS attended 9 school open houses or back-to-school events and distributed magnets that included important parent information: Days schools where closed, contact information for the Health Resource Coordinator; and information on the importance of health care and the Healthy Start Program. Through this avenue parents received Healthy Start information and a person to contact for one-on-one assistance.
West Side Ecumenical Ministry: Swing Into School Days
This grantee implemented advertisements and public service announcements, as well as an event promoting Healthy Start Healthy Families and Head Start. Recruitment was completed in Cleveland area neighborhoods.

Summit YMCA: Back-to-School Fair
After providing marketing throughout neighborhood churches and stores, and YMCA programs, the YMCA held an event distributing book bags and school supplies for children. While the children were playing games, parents were educated about Healthy Start Healthy Families and offered an application by trained YMCA staff members.

Community Action of Wayne & Medina Counties: Baby Fair
During the Medina County Baby Fair, Medina County Head Start personnel provided families with book bags that included school supplies and Healthy Start Healthy Families information and applications. Representatives also answered families’ questions and assisted with applications as needed.

SOAR Development Corporation: Forrest Park Family Fair
In cooperation with Hamilton County Educational Service Center’s Head Start Program, a community-wide fair was held for families with a variety of games and activities while important information and applications were distributed about Healthy Start Healthy Families and Head Start programs.

During this event, children received school supplies and backpacks for the upcoming school year. In addition, Healthy Start Healthy Family fact sheets, applications, and income guidelines were included in promotional lunch bags.

Lima Allen Council on Community Affairs: Covering Kids and Families back-to-School Event
In partnership with St. Rita’s Medical Center and the Lima Community Health Center, a Health Olympics was held for Head Start and Early Head Start families with a focus on the Healthy Start Healthy Families Program, which assisting families in enrolling for health coverage.
Covering Kids & Families: Back to School Mini-Grants

Tuscarawas County Job & Family Services: HSHF Outreach
This grantee provided a Healthy Start Healthy Families Application packets with stamped returned envelopes and program information to every family in attendance at Back-To-School events. In addition, volunteers were present to answer inquiries and assist families with the application.

2005

The Northwest Local School District: 9th Annual Back-to-School Health and Safety Fair
This event, working with Legal Aid of Cincinnati, promoted the importance of health insurance for families and children, and assisted families with the Healthy Start Healthy Families application process.

Columbiana County DJFS: Covering Kids Back-to-School Enrollment Health Fair
Utilizing free school supplies, refreshments, and face painting as an avenue to bring people in, this event focused on educating families on the importance of health care coverage and enrolling children.

Beech Acres: Back-to-School Bash
This event provided neighborhood resources for a welcoming approach for the beginning of the school year. A focus was placed on educating parents and enrolling children and families in Healthy Start Healthy Families.

United Way of Wayne and Holmes Counties: Healthy Start Healthy Families Outreach Project
This initiative focused on getting HSHF information out to families at Open House events, and sending information home with children in grades K-4 through 24 grade schools. Also, outreach was focused for 6 days at the county fair. Parents had access to applications and application assistance from knowledgeable individuals.

Pickaway County Health Department: Back-to-School Week
Through heavily publicized efforts and educational sessions, this project targeted school aged children in kindergarten through fifth grade. Special emphasis was placed on identifying children and families needing enrollment in HSHF, as well as updating children’s school immunizations.

Cincinnati-Hamilton County Community Action Agency: Parent Orientations
Orientation was conducted at 2 sites to inform parents about services offered by local programs. At this time, the Health Services Manger stressed the importance of health care coverage and shared HSHF program.
Through donation of school supplies and backpacks, the agency included HSHF fact sheets and applications in promotional lunch bags. Parents had their questions answered and were also offered HSHF application help.

First Call for Help: School Supplies Program
While low-income families attended the School Supplies Program, they were asked about their health coverage status. Families who said that they had no health coverage were educated on the program, as well as provided with HSHF application assistance.

2006

Clinton County Community Action Program Head Start: Pre-Enrollment Screening Days
During Head Start Enrollment screening, children enrolled in Head Start received hearing and vision examinations, as well as a social-emotional health screening. During this time, representatives were present from participating Ohio Medicaid Managed Care Organizations, These representatives spoke with parents about health care coverage, Healthy Start Healthy Families, and how services would impact their families. Legal Aid Society of Cincinnati was also in attendance to assist families with difficulties with or questions about receiving coverage.

Toledo Area Ministries/Project Dignity: School Clothing and Uniform Project
For 14 days during the month of August, appointments were available to review eligibility for Healthy Start Healthy Families coverage. In conjunction with these appointments, families selected school clothing and uniforms through Project Dignity. As an incentive for them to come during the month of August when the back-to-school efforts were taking place, families were offered free socks or underwear for their school aged children. All families were screened regarding health care coverage and offered Healthy Start Healthy Families applications & assistance.

Dental Center of Northwest Ohio: Back to School Parade & Fair
The Back to School Parade and Fair offered an opportunity for children to have fun while parents & guardians received valuable information on community resources in Toledo. Although a wide variety of resources were offered, there was a distinct focus on enrolling families and children in Healthy Start Healthy Families.

FirstLink Kinship Navigator Program: Kinship Family Back-to-School Fair
This fair served as a school supply giveaway and resource fair event for grandparents and other relatives raising non-biological children in Central Ohio. Although 23 community agencies where present for the event, focus was placed on health care concerns, particularly children’s enrollment.
L.C.
A 5 year old child, with non-citizen parents, has a condition called Legg Calve Perth’s condition, an illness that causes the bone in the hip to die. The condition requires surgery. Through Covering Kids and Families efforts, the family received education about Healthy Start Healthy Families and got assistance with the application, and obtained coverage for the child, as well as his 4 year old sister. Through a partnership referral through Cincinnati Public Schools, the family obtained needed health care services through Healthy Start Healthy Families coverage.

G.C.
A 24 year old single mother has children ages 2 and 4. The 4 year old has been diagnosed with a speech delay. The young lady worked as a receptionist making $1,720/month (125% FPL). She was carrying family coverage through her employer and paying $463.46 per month in premiums, or 27% of her income. Due to the high cost of health insurance, she was unable to make ends meet and could not pay her rent. Through CKF outreach she was provided HSHF application assistance and was approved for health care coverage for her children. The mother switched to single coverage through her employer which costs her $158 per month, or only 9% of her income, which allowed her to meet her family’s needs.

A.W.
A 33 year old married parent had 3 children ages 10, 14, & 15. The 10 year old girl was having trouble in school, and needed medication, however, the family could not afford it. A school nurse referred the child to a Covering Kids and Families program and Healthy Start Healthy Families application assistance was facilitated. The application was approved and five family members obtained medical coverage.

A.M.
An 11 month old child has a single mother who works for a company making seat cushions for lawn furniture and school buses with a monthly income of $1,056 a month. Covering Kids and Families programming offered assistance and her application was approved in 8 days. The child received needed health benefits to grow up healthy.

J.P.P.
A 24 year old, mother of an infant had outstanding medical bills from a hospital and medical testing facility totaling $1,645.75 from delivery of her child. She was also paying $50 per newborn health visit at a local health center. She had also taken her infant to Children’s Hospital Emergency Room to receive care, and had not received a bill yet. With Covering Kids and Families program intervention, and HSHF application approval, she received eligibility backdated to cover her medical bills and insure continued coverage for her baby.
During a Covering Kids and Family Enrollment Blitz at Kroger, as part of Cover the Uninsured Week, a 47 year old father and his 14 year old daughter passed by and asked about Healthy Start Healthy Families. The father worked full-time as a delivery driver, yet had no medical coverage through his employer and therefore has no medical insurance for himself nor his daughter.

After completing the application he received notification that his application was approved for health care benefits for his daughter. Dad called and sought advice in regards to selecting a Managed Care Plan for his daughter. Advice was given to him to check with his daughter’s pediatrician and see what plan he/she accepts and select that plan. At this point in time, dad explained that she has no pediatrician and that he just takes her to Children’s Hospital’s emergency room when she gets sick. Dad was then educated on the available Managed Care Plans, and how to secure a regular pediatrician for his daughter.

As for dad, he was not qualified to receive Healthy Families. However, he lived very close to a community health center, where he can receive low-cost services, but was not aware that the resource was there. He too was connected to health provider resources through programs of the Ohio Covering Kids and Families initiative.
Lessons Learned...

- Advocacy for streamlining re-enrollment to increase the retention rate for parents and families is vital, but difficult.
- Privacy and confidentiality must be considered when planning outreach events.
- For many families, several contacts must be made before an application is completed.
- Advocating with employers to participate in the enrollment process as a means to stabilize their employee’s healthcare can be fruitful once employers share the information with their workforce.
- Follow-up to outreach is essential.
- Continued advocacy needs to be implemented towards reducing the inconsistencies between children’s and parent’s access and eligibility to Healthy Start Healthy Families.
- Schools have been a great source for marketing and increasing awareness.
- When planning on-site events, the schedules of working parents must be considered.
- Tracking applications by asking “How did you hear about Healthy Start Healthy Families?” is critical to measuring outcomes and determining future outreach.
- Informing individuals and families about HSHF, and having them complete an application while they are waiting for another service has proved effective. Success has been achieved in enrollment at WIC Office waiting rooms. This concept can be furthered by implementing the idea in churches, at city parks, and at youth sports events.
Contacts & Further Information

Children’s Defense Fund– Ohio
395 East Broad Street, Suite 330
Columbus, Ohio 43215
www.childrensdefense.org

Covering Kids & Families
Communications Team:
1010 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20007
http://coveringkidsandfamilies.org/

Children’s Defense Fund

Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
88 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
www.jfs.ohio.gov

Local CKF Projects:
Toledo Project:
Neighborhood Health Association
313 Jefferson Drive
Toledo, Ohio 43604

Southwest Ohio Project:
Legal Aid of Greater Cincinnati
215 East 9th Street, Suite 200
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
www.lascinti.org/
The Covering Kids and Families Coalition seeks to enroll eligible, uninsured children and families in Medicaid and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

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