

CDF Freedom Schools® National Days of Social Action

A Healthy Start for Every Child: A National Campaign to Enroll Uninsured Children in Health Coverage through the CDF Freedom Schools

Overview: Recent landmark national health reform legislation will give 32 million people in America, including more than 95 percent of all children, access to health coverage previously beyond their reach. Now it's time to sign children up for the health coverage for which they are eligible.

This year's *CDF Freedom Schools* National Days of Social Action will be a month-long effort to provide every *CDF Freedom Schools* scholar with a chance to sign up for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or Medicaid.

Throughout the month of July, *CDF Freedom Schools* across the country will hold outreach and enrollment events to link uninsured children and youths with health coverage.

The campaign has three goals:

- To link uninsured children in *CDF Freedom Schools* and their siblings with health coverage through CHIP, Medicaid or a local health care resource.
- To inform servant leader interns that young adults under the age of 26 will qualify for their parents' health insurance plan if they are not receiving health insurance from an employer and encourage them to take this message back to their campuses.
- To contact local school superintendents and encourage them to hold "Back to School Enrollment Drives" to enroll uninsured children in health coverage.

Below are steps to help you in planning your *CDF Freedom Schools* National Days of Social Action. A CDF staff person will be contacting you and will send you additional materials to help you plan your enrollment drive.

1. **Identify the number of uninsured children and siblings at your *CDF Freedom Schools* site.** Use your site enrollment forms to identify the number of uninsured children at your site.
2. **Contact a local organization that assists families in applying for health coverage to be part of your enrollment drive.** Your CDF staff liaison will provide you with a list of organizations that assist children and families in applying for health coverage in your state. Invite the enrollment organization to come to your site and help sign uninsured children up for health coverage. You may want to also invite friends and family, the local neighborhood and local places of worship to come to the enrollment drive.
3. **Let families know what they need to bring BEFORE the enrollment drive so that they will be prepared to sign their children up for coverage.**
 - ✓ Send flyers home with children now and a few days before the event to let families know exactly what they should bring to apply for health coverage. (Your CDF staff liaison will

provide you with flyers telling families what to bring to apply for health coverage in your state.)

- ✓ Announce the enrollment drive and distribute flyers at parent meetings.
- ✓ If you are making your drive open to the public, distribute flyers in the local community, including local places of worship.

4. Preparing for the enrollment drive

- ✓ Ask the enrollment organization to provide a brief training for you and your servant leader interns on child health coverage programs in your state. This will help you all understand who is eligible, what benefits are covered in your state, and what documents must be submitted with an application.
- ✓ CDF staff will provide you with a sample flyer, sign-in sheet, sample press release, and a sheet that tells parents what happens after they submit the application.
- ✓ Your local CHIP or Medicaid office should be able to tell you how to get copies of the application. Make sure you have enough materials for every *CDF Freedom Schools* child and their siblings. The application may also be available online.
- ✓ If you are opening your drive up to the larger community, make sure to provide additional applications.

5. Publicizing your enrollment drive

- ✓ Send a press release to the local media to let families know about the enrollment drive. The press release should be sent out several days before the event.
- ✓ You should also invite elected officials, local superintendents and community leaders to come so that they can see the importance of enrolling uninsured children in health coverage.

6. Enrollment Day (E-Day!)

- ✓ Make sure you have several copies of the sign-in sheet. Every family assisted should sign in.
- ✓ Make sure to have copies of applications at the site. If possible, try to have a copier at the site so that you can photocopy documents for families to include with their applications. You should also provide pens and highlighters. Highlighters are especially helpful in identifying any incomplete areas that families need to fill out.
- ✓ Provide activities to entertain children during the drive. Ideas include:
 - An art project on the importance of health coverage for children. Children could create artwork on why it is important for children to have health coverage. Artwork could then be displayed in local hospitals and community centers.
 - Puppet show on the importance of children's health coverage.
 - Focus on books that address health coverage and incorporate health coverage discussions in activities and reading times.

- ✓ Collect stories of uninsured children and families who have had difficulty accessing health coverage for their children. CDF will provide you with a story collection form and media release for families to sign if they want to share their story. Collecting stories will be critical for CDF national and state staff to use to inform lawmakers of changes that need to be made in the children's health coverage system.
- ✓ Make sure to have a resource table for children who are ineligible for CHIP and Medicaid. CDF will provide resource lists of programs that are available to children who are not eligible for CHIP and Medicaid.

7. Following up on your enrollment drive

- ✓ CDF will send you an online report form for you to complete and submit. Please make sure to complete the report so that we can measure the impact of the health coverage campaign. The report form will include updates on the number of children and families assisted in applying for health coverage at your enrollment drive.
- ✓ Send copies of the sign in sheet to your CDF staff liaison and to the local enrollment partner so that they can follow up with families if applications are incomplete or families need further assistance.
- ✓ Make sure that applications are submitted. You can either make sure that the partner enrollment organization takes the applications, or you can submit the applications in the mail or to your local Medicaid / CHIP office.
- ✓ Make sure to thank your partner enrollment organization for helping with the enrollment drive and any elected officials, superintendents or community leaders who attended.

8. Planting the seeds for continued action: Contact your local superintendent about holding a Back to School children's health coverage enrollment drive!

- ✓ Now that you have held a *CDF Freedom Schools* enrollment drive, you can be a leader in your community to help reach even more children! Contact your local superintendent and ask them to hold "Back to School Enrollment Drives" throughout your local school district to enroll uninsured children in health coverage. (CDF staff will provide a list of superintendents serving your area and some talking points that may be helpful in making contact with the superintendents.)

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring EVERY child a *Healthy Start* in life
and access to health coverage!