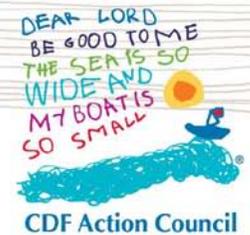


Children's Defense Fund Advent Calendar for Child Advocates



This Advent we prepare for the birth of the most famous poor child in history, who was born in difficult circumstances to a family without needed resources. In these coming weeks, our nation's elected leaders are making decisions that will affect the health, well-being, and lives of all our nation's children.

Use this Advent Calendar to prepare your heart, hands, mind and voice as each week you:

- **Light** an advent candle, read a passage from the Gospel of John, and offer a prayer
- **Learn** about children's needs for health care and reflect on a psalm
- **Link** a reading from Luke with children's needs today and our response
- **Lift** up children's needs through prayer, fasting and taking action
- **Listen** for how God is speaking to you through a new meditation each week offered on CDF's website
- **Look** for what a passage has to say to you about a concern affecting children
- **Love** children and families through your compassionate actions

Additional resources are available on the Children's Defense Fund's website at www.childrensdefense.org and on the website for the Children's Defense Fund Action Council at www.cdfactioncouncil.org Use them to learn more and take action.

Advent Calendar for Child Advocates



	Sunday: Light	Monday: Learn	Tuesday: Link	Wednesday: Lift Up	Thursday: Listen	Friday: Look	Saturday: Love
First Week of Advent	30 Light the advent candle of hope. Read John 1:1-5 As you prepare for the coming of Christ, the Hope of the World, pray that our nation makes the hope of health care a reality for all children.	31 More than 8 million children in our nation lack health coverage. Read Psalm 3 as if you were one such child.	1 Read Luke 1:39-45 How do you link this reading to our call to stand with and for each other, especially pregnant women and children?	2 Email your Senators and lift up the importance of health coverage for children that is comprehensive, affordable and accessible. Visit CDFActionCouncil.org for a sample message.	3 Read this week's Child Health Meditation at www.childrensdefense.org/faith .	4 Read Matthew 2:1-12 Look for what this passage says to us about the threats to our children and about those who defy expectations and convention to protect children—even those they barely know.	5 Send a note of thanks to the health care providers in your or your family's life or write holiday cards for children at the local hospital.
Second Week of Advent	6 Light the advent candle of peace. Read John 1:6-9 As you await the coming of the Prince of Peace, pray that soon parents will know the peace of affordable health coverage for their children.	7 Two out of 3 of the more than 8 million uninsured children are eligible for CHIP or Medicaid but not enrolled. Ending bureaucratic barriers will help to ensure that eligible children get the health care they need and can keep it. Read Psalm 10 and go back to verse 14 and read it first as directed to God, then as if directed to you. How will you be a children's helper?	8 Read Luke 1:46-56 How do you link this reading to our call to lift up children and others considered "lowly," and to place their priorities above those of the powerful?	9 Commit to a day of prayer and fasting. Use this day to deepen your faithful attention to the suffering and need for health care of our nation's children.	10 Read this week's Child Health Meditation at www.childrensdefense.org/faith .	11 Read Matthew 2:16-18 Look for what this passage says to us about the jeopardy our children face and the grief of parents who have lost children for lack of health coverage. Read the story of Devante Johnson on CDF's web site.	12 Donate a children's book to the waiting room of a local health clinic or hospital
Third Week of Advent	13 Light the advent candle of joy. Read John 1:10-13 As you prepare for the joy we know at Christmas, pray that all families will know the joy of health and wholeness.	14 Guarantee every child access to the health and mental health care they need. Read Psalm 126 imagining the joy you would feel as a family who has received health coverage at long last.	15 Read Luke 1:57-66 How do you link this reading to the power of spreading the word among friends and neighbors? For a child without health care, how would you answer the question "What then will this child become?"	16 Fast, pray, email or call your Senators and urge them to be a Champion for Children's Health and to ensure that the Senate health reform bill will leave no children worse off after health reform than they are now. Visit CDFActionCouncil.org for a sample message.	17 Read this week's Child Health Meditation at www.childrensdefense.org/faith .	18 Read Matthew 2:19-23 Look for what this passage says to us about the lengths to which parents go to protect their children from harm. To what lengths will you go to ensure all children health coverage?	19 Visit a local health clinic and ask how you can help.
Fourth Week of Advent	20 Light the advent candle of love John 1:14-18 As you await the celebration of God's Love incarnate in our midst, pray that our love for children will be manifest in how we ensure they have the health care they need.	21 Ensure every child affordable coverage no matter where they live. Read Psalm 116 and recall your own experience of thankfulness about the recovery from illness of a child you love.	22 Read Luke 1:67-80 How do you link this reading to our call—and our children's call—to be prophets, speaking God's word of justice and mercy? How will health care bring new light to children and families in the darkness of illness, debt, and despair?	23 Call your Senators and Representative with greetings of the season and to let them know you need their commitment to ensure all children will be better off – not worse off—after health reform than they are now. Visit CDFActionCouncil.org for a sample message.	24 Read this week's Child Health Meditation at www.childrensdefense.org/faith .	25 As you celebrate Jesus' birth, Immanuel, God-with-us, commit to being God's hands and feet and voice with and for children in need in the days to come. How will you bear light, learn, link, lift up, listen, look, and love?	In the words of Howard Thurman, now the real work of Christmas begins....