

CONNECTING KIDS TO COVERAGE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Campaign Notes eNewsletter – September 25, 2014



Using Personal Stories to Heighten Interest in Medicaid and CHIP Enrollment

Personal stories resonate. They grab our attention and reel us in. For parents who may not know about Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), hearing about other families – like [Shellie's](#) recently highlighted on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services blog – who obtained health coverage for their children and teens through these programs can spark interest. It can even drive parents to take the first step toward enrollment by visiting websites such as [InsureKidsNow.gov](#) or [HealthCare.gov](#), calling national or local assistance lines for more information or attending an enrollment event.

Parents who have enrolled their children – and themselves – in Medicaid or CHIP can be great ambassadors for your organization’s outreach efforts. A personal story can be especially powerful in bringing program facts to life. [See](#) how the Valles family obtained health coverage for their kids when they went grocery shopping and stopped by an enrollment table hosted by the [Children’s Defense Fund-TX](#) (CDF-TX). CDF-TX’s storybanking expertise was featured on a Campaign [webinar](#) on April 3, 2014, “Enrolling Eligible Children & Teens in Medicaid and CHIP Year Round.”

Identifying Parents with Personal Stories to Share

Here are a few tips for identifying and vetting families with personal stories:

- To identify families with compelling personal stories, connect with organizations and trained assisters who help eligible individuals enroll in Medicaid and CHIP. People who help families enroll are likely to have established trust and have a good rapport with them. Ask enrollment assisters for basic information about the family to help you determine if the story is a good fit for your organization’s outreach efforts.
- Once you identify a family with a story to share, set up a one-on-one conversation to get more information. Ask how the family learned about Medicaid and CHIP and whether they got help enrolling in the program or enrolled on their own. Ask for details that can help others identify with the story – for example, does the enrolled child have any particular health problems? Seek specific examples of how enrollment in Medicaid or CHIP has improved the family’s quality of life. You may have to ask some sensitive questions about their worries before health insurance and how they managed to get through illnesses, along with questions about household income to confirm that they are eligible for Medicaid and CHIP in your state.

Working with Media Outlets

Having at least one or two families that are willing to talk to the media can increase the likelihood that your organization and your issue will be featured by local news outlets. Personal stories, such as this one shared by a parent with a child receiving CHIP coverage during a [recent radio interview](#) featuring Positively Kids in Las Vegas, NV, may be a “news hook” and can demonstrate the relevance of the story to the local community. Always obtain the family’s permission before sharing their information with the media, each and every time. Don’t assume that family members will be comfortable meeting the news

team at their home, workplace or school. Always confirm with the family before suggesting a location to a reporter. Listen carefully during these conversations, if someone seems uncomfortable, don't push the person to give the interview.

Before introducing a family spokesperson to a media contact, make sure he or she feels comfortable sharing his or her story and responding to questions. For all media interactions, encourage your spokespeople to speak clearly and with confidence, stay on the topics you practiced and smile when appropriate. When possible, join the family for the interview to help respond to difficult questions about the program and jump in if the spokesperson is struggling for an answer or has veered off topic.

Campaign Resources: Check out this [Connecting Kids to Coverage Back-to-School Booster](#), or watch the recorded webinar "[Using Media to Amplify Outreach and Enrollment Efforts](#)" for tips on media outreach.

Campaign in Action – Health Care for All (MA)

[Health Care for All](#) in Massachusetts uses personal stories to generate media coverage and reach the diverse families in their community. After identifying and confirming the stories of Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking families, Health Care for All features them in language-specific [newspapers](#) or on radio shows. Health Care for All helps the families prepare to speak to the media and have their stories featured in written materials and on the news. Families may also attend public events to share their experiences with other eligible families. **Campaign Resources:** Check out our [Outreach Video Library to learn more about how Health Care for All](#) effectively reached out to ethnic media outlets and faith-based communities to execute a successful [phone-a-thon](#).

Other Helpful Resources

Several organizations that have additional tools and helpful ideas on effective storybanking:

- [Community Catalyst](#) has an online [guide on storybanking](#), with resources, such as a sample discussion guide.
- [Families USA](#) has a [PDF guide](#) that provides a step-by-step process for gathering stories. If your organization does in-person enrollments, you may also want to listen to Families USA's May 14, 2014 [webinar](#) specifically geared to help enrollment assisters start story banks.

Stay Connected With the National Campaign – In 3 Easy Steps

- Follow the Campaign on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). *Don't forget to re-tweet or share our messages with your network or use our #Enroll365 hashtag in your posts.*
- [Share](#) our materials widely. We have more than 50 National Campaign resources available, including translated print materials, to use in outreach and enrollment efforts.
- Contact us to get more involved with the National Campaign at InsureKidsNow@fleishman.com or 1-855-313-KIDS (5437).

The Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign Notes eNewsletter is distributed throughout the year and provides updates on National Campaign activities. If a friend or colleague forwarded this email to you, [sign up](#) to receive this eNewsletter directly to your inbox.