

Protecting Children's Health

Affordable Health Care Coverage Is Available

(NAPSA)—As families get their children ready for a successful school year, health experts are encouraging parents whose children do not have health insurance to apply for coverage through the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Medicaid.

"Children in America need and deserve to arrive on the first day of school healthy and ready to learn," said Dr. Richard Carmona, U.S. Surgeon General. "When children have health insurance, they have better access to the basic health services they need to grow and be healthy."

In addition, children who have access to preventive care and a relationship with their doctors and other health care providers are more likely to develop better health habits. These advantages improve their opportunities for good health.

There are 7.8 million uninsured children in the U.S., according to the 2002 National Survey of American Families, and more than half are eligible for low-cost and free health care coverage through Medicaid or SCHIP. Many of these children are in working families.

These programs, in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, give children access to routine



Health care coverage is available for working families with low to moderate incomes.

checkups, prescription medicines, hearing and vision screenings, as well as health care when they are sick. Children who are enrolled in SCHIP and Medicaid do not have to rely on the emergency room, where care is more costly and less efficient, for routine care. When they need care, they can visit a doctor they and their parents know and with whom they have established a relationship.

Families can find out more about low-cost and free health care coverage for their children by calling toll-free 1-877-KIDS-NOW.