

# Fulfilling Pennsylvania's Promise to Cover All Kids

## CHESTER COUNTY

**About 1,000 Chester County Children Are Uninsured.**

**Most Delay or Forego Critical Health Care Services.**

An estimated 24,000 PA children are both undocumented and uninsured and approximately 952 of them live in Chester County. They do not qualify for CHIP, Medicaid or ACA Marketplace coverage.

**Pennsylvania's 'Cover All Kids' Does Not Cover All Kids.** PCCY interviewed a sample of parents and applied the aggregate interview results to Chester County. PCCY found that<sup>1</sup>:

### Nearly 9 Out Of 10 Children Received Delayed Or No Care At All For A Medical Concern. Among These Children:

**100% Of Parents**

**Did not seek health care for their child because they could not afford it.**

**91% Of Children**

**Received delayed or no care for a serious medical condition requiring the expertise of a specialist.**

**67% Of Children**

**Were harmed by delaying or foregoing health care according to their parents.**

**42% Of Children**

**Were absent, earned lower grades or had behavioral problems in school because of an unmet health problem.**

**28% Of Children**

**Required emergency room care because a neglected health problem worsened.**

**Pennsylvania Is Losing Its National Standing For Children.** Pennsylvania is the birthplace of the federal CHIP program. Five states – California (36 counties), Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Washington and the District of Columbia – have adopted reforms to make undocumented immigrant children eligible for public health insurance. Collectively, at least 202,000 children have gained access to health care in these states by enrolling in public health insurance.

**Pennsylvania Can Afford to Expand CHIP Coverage.** Based on the experience of other states, PCCY estimates that the cost for the first full year to operate expanded coverage would be \$15.4 million. This amount is equivalent to 10% of the state FY2014 CHIP budget.

1. PCCY interviewed 53 parents of undocumented and uninsured children living in southeast Pennsylvania including 10 parents in Chester County. We extrapolated the results of the 53 interviews to calculate the projections for Chester County.

## Victor - Age 15



*A True Story: Victor, who is 15 years old, had the misfortune to be born two months before his mother moved here from Mexico to find work. The family lives in a very tiny house used by mushroom workers in Chester County; a cramped, box-like structure with a curtain separating their sleeping quarters. While all the siblings share the deprivations of poverty, Victor alone suffers from the deprivation of not having health insurance.*

*Consequently, his medical care all too often consists of an aspirin and what his mother believes to be a nutritious meal—although she knows neither is sufficient. “I never know when he’s sick enough to need a doctor or maybe he’ll just get better on his own,” she says remorsefully. “It’s not like with the other kids. If something is wrong with them, I can always take them for help.” But aspirin rarely meets Victor’s needs. It’s not enough to handle the pain from a tooth he broke in a sport’s accident and the several unfilled cavities found by a dentist he saw six years ago. It’s not enough to quell the constant knee pain that has plagued him since he tripped and fell off a treadmill at school. His mother knew he should have gone to the ER but she had no money and hoped he’d heal on his own. And she was petrified that someone at the hospital would report him for deportation.*

*“Whenever Victor is sick or hurt, he wants to go to the doctor,” says his mother as tears flood her careworn face. “Over and over he asks me, ‘Why can’t I go to the nice places you take my sister and brother?’ All I can tell him is, ‘You wouldn’t understand.’ How can you explain this kind of unfairness to your child? I feel so helpless and worried all the time.”*

Victor is not his real name. He is from Chester County.  
The image in this story is not Victor because he is undocumented.

See PCCY’s true stories and facts in our report,  
***“Fulfilling Pennsylvania’s Promise to Cover All Kids”***

Download the full report at: [www.pccy.org/fulfillingthepromise](http://www.pccy.org/fulfillingthepromise)



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