

public citizens for children + youth

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Pennsylvania Faces Coverage Gap for Hispanic Children

Advocates call on legislators to close the gap so all kids have equal access to health insurance.

PHILADELPHIA (January 15, 2016) – Pennsylvania’s rate of uninsured Hispanic children is now at 7.4 percent, according to a new report released today by the Georgetown Center for Children and Families, the National Council of La Raza, and Public Citizens for Children and Youth (PCCY)

The report, which assessed uninsurance rates during the first year that most of the Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) coverage provisions took effect, found that about 22,000 Hispanic children living in Pennsylvania did not have health coverage in 2014. Advocates noted that Pennsylvania’s uninsurance rate for Hispanic children (7.4 percent) is significantly higher than the rate for all children (5.2 percent).

“The state should take steps to close the coverage gap for Hispanic kids, and provide opportunities for all children, regardless of immigration status, who meet the income requirements to gain access to affordable health care through Medicaid or expanding eligibility for CHIP. That’s what Dream Care’s about,” said Colleen McCauley, PCCY’s Health Policy Director.

While the vast majority of Hispanic children in Pennsylvania are citizens or lawfully present immigrants, and eligible for Medicaid and CHIP, others are not and go without coverage.

“Pennsylvania’s uninsured rate for Hispanic children did not improve from 2013 to 2014,” said Sonya Schwartz, a report co-author and research fellow at Georgetown University’s Center. “This is a missed opportunity to cover more kids particularly when two out of three uninsured Hispanic children across the country are eligible for Medicaid and CHIP but unenrolled.”

Colleen McCauley added, “Healthy Kids make healthy learners. Investing in health coverage for all children today is important because they will be the doctors, teachers and workers of tomorrow.”

Individuals can learn more about coverage options through the PCCY helpline: 215-563-5848 x17. For more information about the Dream Care campaign: bit.ly/DreamCare

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