

2016 California Policy Agenda

Innovation at Work for America's Children



The Children's Partnership (TCP) advances policies and programs that make a measurable impact in the lives of children in underserved communities throughout California. Under a new President and with a robust team, TCP will build on past progress guided by our 2016 policy agenda to help all children lead healthy and productive lives.

HEALTH COVERAGE AND CARE

Promote Efficient & Effective Implementation of Coverage for Undocumented Children and Advocate Coverage for All Californians.

The 2015 state budget secured Medi-Cal coverage for income-eligible undocumented children, with coverage slated to begin no sooner than May 2016. TCP will work with the State and stakeholders to ensure all eligible families are able to easily enroll their children and have access to the health care they need. We will also continue to advocate the expansion of coverage to the up to 1.5 million adults in California who remain uninsured because they do not qualify for coverage programs due to their immigration status.

In 2016, TCP will:

- Collaborate with the State; the Legislature; counties; philanthropy; and immigrant, consumer, and health advocates to plan and implement effective and efficient steps to enroll undocumented children in coverage;
- Through our ALL IN For Health Campaign, equip the education community with tools to inform immigrant communities about new and existing health coverage options and connect them to enrollment assistance; and
- Partner with leading immigrant, consumer, business, and health advocacy organizations to promote health coverage for all Californians.

Maximize Health Coverage and Care for Families Through Covered California and Medi-Cal.

Implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has greatly reduced the number of uninsured, and we celebrate the coverage of 13.8 million Californians as a success. There is still work to make sure enrolling in and keeping health coverage is straightforward and that having coverage translates to receiving timely, quality medical and dental care.

In 2016, TCP will:

- Assess the role California's implementation of the ACA has had on children's health, develop recommendations for how California's implementation of ACA may better serve children, and work with policymakers and other decision-makers to pursue improvements;
- Work with the State and stakeholders to continue to streamline health coverage enrollment and renewal processes for children and families, especially those who transition between Covered California and Medi-Cal;
- Work with the State, counties, Covered California, and partners to improve enrollment systems to ensure children and families applying for Medi-Cal receive coverage in a timely manner;
- Urge Covered California and the Department of Health Care Services to monitor and publicly report on the experiences of families in which some members are enrolled in Medi-Cal and others in health plans through Covered California so that we can make informed recommendations for better coordination between the two health coverage program options;
- Monitor children's access to medical and dental care in Medi-Cal and Covered California, identify gaps in care for these children, and pursue targeted solutions to close these gaps; and
- Pursue opportunities to establish the Covered California essential health benefit (EHB) of "pediatric services" as comparable to benefits in the federal Children's Health Insurance Program.

Equip Community Leaders with Tools to Connect Families to Health Coverage and Care.

Reaching families in their communities is a critical piece of our efforts to ensure eligible children and families enroll in health coverage. For example, California's 10,500 schools and 44,000 early learning providers continue to serve as critical "on-ramps" to health coverage. The TCP-led ALL IN For Health Campaign has made over 7.3 million contacts with parents, students, and school employees across California to provide health coverage information and enrollment assistance. In addition, ALL IN For Health continues to help families understand their health coverage, encourage them to get needed health care, remind them to stay enrolled, and assist undocumented family members with health coverage and care. Enlisting additional community-based partners will strengthen our work to connect families to coverage and care, while ensuring TCP's efforts accurately reflect the needs of the communities we intend to serve. This year, our community-based outreach efforts will be critical for reaching families with undocumented children newly eligible for Medi-Cal.

In 2016, TCP will:

- Build on current partnerships with statewide education leaders—including the State Superintendent of Public Instruction—and engage new education leaders in motivating families to enroll in and keep health coverage as well as use that coverage to get care;
- Work with schools/school districts and early learning sites across the state to carry out and institutionalize activities that connect families to health coverage and care;
- Partner with immigrant groups and other health and consumer advocates to help the education

community inform families with undocumented children about their new Medi-Cal eligibility and connect them to coverage and care resources;

- Further the current collaborative effort with the small business community and identify and implement new ways to engage small business owners in connecting employees and their families to coverage; and
- Explore new partnerships to engage communities and reach families with information related to health coverage and enrollment assistance.

ORAL HEALTH

Improve the Oral Health of California's Most Vulnerable Children.

Approximately 5.5 million California children are enrolled in Medi-Cal, but fewer than half of these children are receiving necessary dental care. While progress has been made, Medi-Cal continues to fall short of meeting the dental care needs of the state's most vulnerable children. In addition to ensuring Medi-Cal works well at the state level, we need innovative solutions to bring care to where children are in the community. Finally, we need to make sure that families know they have dental coverage through Medi-Cal and Covered California and help them understand how to use that coverage.

In 2016, TCP will:

- Spearhead efforts to ensure resources for statewide implementation of the Virtual Dental Home (VDH) and lead coalition efforts to expand the VDH to more sites across the state, including Head Start sites and schools;
- Partner with local and statewide stakeholders, the Legislature, and the Administration to identify and promote effective, sustainable, and innovative solutions to bring dental care to children enrolled in Medi-Cal, especially young children;
- Help lead efforts to shape the State Department of Public Health's (DPH) oral health plan, led by the newly appointed Dental Director—by co-chairing the Access Workgroup and participating in the Advisory Committee—to ensure the plan makes meaningful recommendations for improving children's oral health and action is taken to begin timely implementation; and
- Work with community partners to educate families about their children's dental benefits and how to get care.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Build on Advances in Technology to Bring Health Care to Children and Families.

Technology is consistently changing the landscape for health care in California and across the country. The integration of technology both in the health care setting and for personal use has the potential to improve the health of families and children as families become more empowered users of their health care and form stronger relationships with their providers. For example, telehealth—the use of technology to provide health care from a distance—has proven to be a high-quality and cost-effective solution to bring care to underserved children in their communities, especially children with special health care needs, those who have mental health care needs, and those who live in rural and other medically underserved areas. In addition, telehealth helps keep children in school and parents at work while saving families money for costs associated with traveling long distances to doctors' appointments, such as costs related to transportation, hotel stays, and child care for other children. As technology continues

to facilitate new innovations in health care, we must ensure children are a priority in the establishment of such changes.

In 2016, TCP will:

- Promote policy and regulatory solutions to facilitate wider adoption of telehealth to address inadequate access to care for children enrolled in Medi-Cal, particularly those with special health care needs;
- Help shape on-the-ground pilot projects to demonstrate telehealth's value in bringing medical, mental health, and dental care to children who would otherwise go without needed care;
- Educate decision-makers about the benefits of telehealth and advance policies to facilitate the use of telehealth to meet the medical, mental health, and dental care needs of underserved children; and
- Explore new opportunities—such as mobile applications and other technologies—and track efforts to ensure all children—especially underserved children—are reaping the health benefits of these advances in technology.

Leverage Technology to Empower and Promote Care Coordination For Those That Need It Most.

In California, there are close to 63,000 children and youth in foster care. Children and youth in foster care experience disconnected and, too often, ineffective, unnecessarily costly, or even harmful services as they transition from placement to placement and move in and out of care. Electronic systems and records of care not only connect providers and caregivers with information necessary to provide appropriate care, but also empower foster youth themselves to take charge of their own health and wellness.

In 2016, TCP will:

- Work to remove policy, practice, and technology barriers to appropriate electronic information exchange that improves delivery and coordination of services for vulnerable children and youth in foster care while protecting their privacy;
- Champion care coordination programs that benefit two generations of youth—pregnant and parenting foster youth and their babies;
- Coordinate efforts to develop state-level plans and address fiscal and sustainability challenges to ensure all children and youth in foster care benefit from electronic care coordination;
- Ensure that California's new Child Welfare Services system is designed to interface with external users and the wider foster care team, including social workers, the juvenile justice system, and health providers; and
- Identify best practices for electronic care coordination for children and youth in foster care and needed policy change through on-the-ground demonstration projects and a learning community.

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