

Fall Kids' Coverage Roundup... The Halloween Edition

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Written by: Questions?

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Going Down a Scary Path: Utah kids are losing health insurance

Over the past two years, Utah has seen an alarming increase in our child uninsured rate. After years of steady progress, it is frightening to see kids lose health insurance. 7.4% or 72,000 Utah kids now lack health insurance, when only 6% or 59,000 kids were uninsured in 2016. We are seeing some of the most significant coverage decline among young children, age 0-5, an age when it is so critical for kids to have access to have screenings, check-ups and care. Why is this happening? Over the past two years Utah and our nation have experienced an unpredictable health care environment, affecting CHIP, Medicaid expansion and the ACA, leading to misinformation and confusion; administrative complexity and lack of continuous coverage leading to disruptions in kids coverage; anti-immigrant policies and rhetoric leading families to feel unwelcome and unsafe enrolling in programs. These are scary barriers keeping Utah kids from getting the care and coverage they need and Voices for Utah Children will be working hard to keep Utah from continuing down this path any further.

Tricks and Treats

After a roller coaster summer, the Utah Department of Health is submitting a waiver proposal to expand Medicaid, fully, up to 138% of the federal poverty level. Currently, Utah has only partially expanded Medicaid. Partial expansion has meant that more individuals are eligible for Medicaid, but also that thousands of individuals and parents are still shut out of coverage, while Utah pays more money to cover fewer people. We are excited for Utah to take this step closer to full Medicaid expansion, as voters supported.

But unfortunately, this latest waiver proposal also includes harmful, **additional barriers** such as work reporting requirements and additional **cost requirements for enrollees**. These added requirements will make it harder for Utah parents and children to get coverage and care. Comments are needed to prevent these harmful requirements from moving forward.

We need your help to get Utah back on the right track to full expansion (the 'treat'

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without the tricks!). [Submit your comments](#) today to stand up for full Medicaid expansion, without additional barriers or restrictions.

Finally, the [Public Charge rule](#) was recently blocked in the courts. The Public Charge is postponed until further notice. But we still have work ahead of us and we must undo the damage already done as a result of anticipation of this harmful rule, and other anti-immigrant hostilities.

Learn more about the latest developments in the Public Charge rule [here](#).