

NEW REPORT: Covering Uninsured Kids Will Save Utah Millions Every Year

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Written by: Jessie Mandle



Utah has 82,000 uninsured children, according to the most recent Census data, which means an estimated 8.3% of children in Utah do not have health insurance. Utah currently ranks 46th in the nation for insured children.

When it comes to addressing this problem, too often public debate focuses on the cost to taxpayers of insuring Utah's 82,000 uninsured children. **But what about the cost of *not* insuring children?** Are there ways in which Utah taxpayers are *already* paying a price for allowing such a high number of uninsured children in our state?

In our new report, we address this question, building on findings from previous research. We explore two key ways in which Utah taxpayers are paying millions of dollars in costs annually for uninsured children:

- 1) **Uncompensated care for Utah's 82,000 uninsured children may be costing state and local governments in Utah about \$8.8 million annually.**
- 2) **Covering all of Utah's uninsured children would likely result in higher educational attainment levels, potentially adding nearly \$10 million to Utah's personal income annually and generating over \$800,000 in new tax revenue each year.**

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In sum, our report finds that **Utah may be losing out on at least \$9.6 million every year because of our high child uninsured rate.**

We hope state leaders and policymakers will consider these findings as they review proposals to help improve Utah's child uninsured rate. We can, as a state, remove barriers to Medicaid and CHIP. We can adopt policies to help the thousands of Utah children unable to access health insurance.

These state proposals have costs, but the status quo is costing us even more. Our failure to act is undermining our state's economy and holding back 82,000 children from achieving their full potential. As a state, we can no longer ignore the costs when thousands of children are uninsured and the profound savings when all children have coverage.

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Insuring Kids Just Makes Sense



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