

# Medi-Cal Protects the Health of California's Children



March 2017

More than 5.7 million children, over half of all California children, have coverage through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), together in California known as Medi-Cal. Medi-Cal has provided affordable, comprehensive, age-appropriate health coverage for low-income children, seniors, children and adults with disabilities, and abused and neglected children in foster care for more than 50 years. Medi-Cal remains a critical children's program – 42 percent of Medi-Cal enrollees are children. As federal policymakers make decisions about our health care system, Medicaid's historically strong protections must be protected from cuts or structural changes that would increase the number of uninsured children, undermine access to crucial health services, and increase costs for families.

## Medi-Cal Provides Access to the Health Services Children Need to Children Survive and Thrive

- Medi-Cal's well-child check-ups, screenings and guarantee of treatment ensure healthy development. Health issues caught early are less expensive to treat, with fewer long-term health consequences.
- Medicaid's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit is the gold standard of coverage for children – it ensures children access to all medically necessary health and mental health services.
- Medi-Cal serves 42 percent of California children with disabilities such as autism. Medi-Cal is often the only viable source of financing for their health needs, which can be extensive. Medi-Cal ensures children have access to the medical therapies and devices such as wheelchairs and hearing aids that allow them to function and learn.
- Compared to low-income uninsured children, children insured by Medi-Cal are significantly more likely to have a regular doctor and receive well-child care, and significantly less likely to have unmet or delayed health needs.

## Medi-Cal is a Smart Investment in California's Future

- Thanks in large part to Medi-Cal, the percentage of uninsured children in California has fallen to a historic low, 3 percent.
- Insured children are more likely than uninsured children to be academically successful, graduate from high school, attend college. In the long run, children covered by Medi-Cal grow up to be healthier as adults, earn higher wages, and pay more in taxes.
- The cost of covering children in Medi-Cal is low: while children make up approximately half of Medi-Cal beneficiaries, their care only constitutes 19 percent of costs.
- Covering a child through Medi-Cal costs significantly less than private coverage. Over the last decade, Medi-Cal's per person costs have been growing more slowly than premiums for private employer coverage.
- Medi-Cal is lean and efficient: its administrative costs are about half those of private insurance.

## Medi-Cal Must Be Protected from Cuts and Changes that Would Harm Children

- Federal action to cut Medicaid through a block grant or per capita cap, or eliminate federal Medicaid expansion funds by repealing the ACA, would not reduce or eliminate health needs, but rather shift the costs of meeting those needs to states, communities, and families. An uninsured child costs the local community \$2,100 per year more than a child insured by Medi-Cal.
- Keeping Medi-Cal strong will help ensure that California's children have access to the health coverage they need to survive, thrive, and drive the economy of tomorrow.

## California Children in Medicaid/CHIP (Medi-Cal) by Congressional District

District	Member of Congress	Number of Children	Percentage of Children
1	LaMalfa	99,000	69%
2	Huffman	76,000	53%
3	Garamendi	93,000	52%
4	McClintock	62,000	42%
5	Thompson	82,000	54%
6	Matsui	128,000	68%
7	Bera	81,000	48%
8	Cook	122,000	63%
9	McNerney	120,000	59%
10	Denham	125,000	63%
11	DeSaulnier	76,000	45%
12	Pelosi	72,000	73%
13	Lee	89,000	62%
14	Speier	65,000	43%
15	Swalwell	59,000	31%
16	Costa	168,000	73%
17	Khanna	53,000	33%
18	Eshoo	40,000	24%
19	Lofgren	92,000	51%
20	Panetta	103,000	57%
21	Valadao	156,000	70%
22	Nunes	112,000	56%
23	McCarthy	106,000	51%
24	Carbajal	75,000	49%
25	Knight	76,000	41%
26	Brownley	80,000	46%
27	Chu	91,000	62%
28	Schiff	89,000	79%
29	Cardenas	138,000	79%
30	Sherman	71,000	47%
31	Aguilar	119,000	61%
32	Napolitano	99,000	60%
33	Lieu	32,000	23%
34	Vacant	138,000	87%
35	Torres	118,000	59%
36	Ruiz	123,000	68%
37	Bass	96,000	68%
38	Sanchez, Linda	84,000	51%
39	Royce	66,000	41%
40	Roybal-Allard	154,000	75%
41	Takano	119,000	60%
42	Calvert	85,000	41%
43	Waters	113,000	62%
44	Barragán	134,000	70%
45	Walters	48,000	29%
46	Correa	119,000	61%
47	Lowenthal	99,000	62%
48	Rohrabacher	61,000	43%
49	Issa	49,000	30%
50	Hunter	81,000	45%
51	Vargas	139,000	74%
52	Peters	39,000	26%
53	Davis	73,000	46%