

KCHIP Effort Reaches Midpoint Goal

Gov. Steve Beshear recently announced that 20,195 children were enrolled in the Kentucky Children's Health Insurance Program (KCHIP) or Medicaid programs by the end of June, an average of more than 2,500 children per month. The Beshear Plan to dramatically cut the number of children without health coverage by removing barriers to KCHIP and Medicaid enrollment kicked off Nov. 1, 2008, and aims to enroll 35,000 eligible children by the end of fiscal year 2010.

"I'm extremely pleased that our increased outreach efforts and simplification of the enrollment process have resulted in progress toward our goal of enrolling as many eligible children as possible in the KCHIP and Medicaid programs," said Gov. Beshear. "Especially during these difficult economic times, when families are struggling more than ever, we must continue our efforts to provide health coverage for as many eligible children as possible."

Gov. Beshear's statewide initiative began in November 2008 with a simplified mail-in application, available online, and targeted outreach efforts. Efforts have included a focus on training community partners to assist with completion of applications; availability of enrollment materials at local health departments, Department for Community Based Services offices and Family Resource and Youth Services Centers; and outreach through health care providers, community action agencies, day care centers, faith-based organizations and many others. Approximately 250,000 mail-in applications, in both English and Spanish, have been distributed through these partnerships. In addition, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) has intensified efforts to re-enroll children who had previously been covered through the programs, including making policy changes to allow families an additional 30 days to return renewal information.

"We plan to continue the outreach efforts that have been successful and launch new ones in the coming months, with a particular emphasis on reaching children and their families through back-to-school campaigns," said CHFS Secretary Janie Miller. "We all know how important it is to provide preventive care to Kentucky's children, and I want to recognize the efforts of those within the Cabinet and our partners in communities across Kentucky who are helping to enroll these eligible children."

CHFS plans to build on collaborative efforts with key stakeholders and community partners as this initiative moves forward. The KCHIP program will be: working with the HANDS and First Steps program to promote enrollment; increasing partnering efforts with the United Way of the Bluegrass and the United Way of Kentucky to provide information through 2-1-1 call centers and agencies such as homeless shelters and food banks; and working with the state's FRYSC program to develop back-to-school campaigns, to name a few efforts.

The KCHIP program provides health insurance to children whose family income is below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, about \$44,100 a year for a family of four. More details of The Beshear Plan and enrollment information are available at <http://kidshealth.ky.gov>

Living Well: Cutbacks in Monthly Spending

Are you searching for ways to cut back on your monthly expenses? Gym memberships are one of those expenses people are looking at cutting as a way to save money. And, according to experts, if you're not getting the results you expected, cutting that gym membership may be an easy decision to make. Not so fast. The benefit of maintaining regular physical activity is essential to good health. We know the benefits of regular exercise are numerous and have long-lasting effects on our mental and physical health.

If you are not getting the most out of your gym experience, take into account some of these gym pitfalls. See if they pertain to you before you consider axing your gym membership simply because you aren't getting the results you desire.

Too much socializing: The gym is a great place to meet people with similar interests. However, if you lose focus as to why you are really there, time is wasted and you may be giving your mouth more of a workout than your body. If so, it's time to refocus!

Lack of intensity: Breaking a sweat does not mean you are getting the best workout. Many gym participants can be seen reading, leaning on the machines or just going through the motions. Think of your workout like a recipe and make sure you have the right ingredients: slowly increasing intensity, adding longer sessions, increasing weights and cross-training.

Overestimating caloric expenditure: Don't let the read-out on the cardio machine fool you. Fitness experts warn users that these calorie estimates are very general, and many variables come into play.

Lack of change: Personal trainers often tell their clients, "If nothing in your workout changes, your body's appearance will not change either." Initially, any physical activity will bring about change, but eventually the body will hit a plateau. A mix of exercise routines will help keep your body guessing, as well as keep you from getting bored. Try to step away from your comfort zone and incorporate new activities offered at your gym.

Seek out a professional: If you decide to consult with a professional, make sure you are working with someone who is certified by an accredited organization. Seeking the help of a professional will not only get you started moving in the right direction, but will also help you achieve your goals and maintain a healthy lifestyle

Fiscal War: Sisterhood of the Traveling Maternity Clothes

By Beth Fisher

It's hard to write about saving money when you haven't been saving much lately. We're expecting our first child any day now, and we've learned with babies there are some things you just can't penny pinch your way through. Sure, cities are loaded with lots of great children's consignment shops, and yard sales are new parents' dream for many things when you're buying on the cheap. But... diapers, baby medicines and medical bills are a bit of a different story.

When it comes to pregnancy, I have learned one valuable lesson in fiscal war: Share your maternity clothes. This might seem like a no-brainer for many of you women out there who've been pregnant. I think just about everyone borrows a few maternity hand-me-downs from their sisters, co-workers, friends, family members and whoever else has been down that empire-waist-lined road before them. Luckily, my sister-in-law Amy has turned maternity clothes sharing into an art form. Long before I ever got pregnant, Amy and her friends began sharing and swapping items back and forth, shipping them off to whichever preggo popped up next. Over the years, the collection has grown to be quite substantial and includes outfits for all seasons. Thankfully, she promptly brought me into the loop when it became apparent Baby Fisher was on board, and a couple of other friends and family members chipped in their hand-me-downs as well. By the end of all the clothes sharing, I barely had to spend a dime (actually, I spent less than \$100 in new items to be specific). It helped out more than you can imagine.

Naturally, the key to good maternity swapping is keeping track of who lent what to whom, carefully labeling and properly caring for the clothes so that they can be passed on to the next mother-to-be when the time arrives. I believe my successor is already awaiting their arrival here in a month of two. And, believe me, the only thing better than receiving the pregnancy clothes will be passing them along!

Fiscal Money Saving Tip of the Week: Maternity clothes aren't the only thing expecting moms can share. Other items, such as pregnancy and parenting books as well as prenatal workout videos, make great pass-alongs.

CHFS Health Tip

Got Shots?

As school nears, parents will be making sure children are up-to-date on immunizations. Now might also be a good time to make sure the adults are up-to-date as well. The Department for

Public Health's Immunization Program has a complete list of recommended immunizations on its Web site, including lists for people in all stages of life. Check it out, then check with your doctor to make sure you've had the necessary vaccinations.

According to the program, vaccines remain the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death from vaccine preventable diseases. They not only help protect vaccinated individuals, but also help protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of infectious disease.

Learn more online at <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/epi/Immunizations+across+the+Lifespan.htm>

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Timeouts aren't just for children who misbehave. They can also work for professionals who find themselves in heated discussions and need to cool down.

Business consultants at the Dartnell Corporation suggest taking a timeout when two sides need a break from conflict. Take a walk, get a cold drink, or just work on other assignments. Then refocus on what's bothering you with a fresh mind. When both parties have time to rethink and refine their positions, they can return to discussions with logical solutions to the conflict.