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A Healthy Colorado**



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 19, 2012

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**COLORADO GAINING GROUND ON HEALTH CARE
COVERAGE AND ACCESS FOR KIDS**

**Report shows that more than 40,000 kids gained coverage since 2008,
yet more than 100,000 remain uninsured**

Today, roughly 90 percent of all children in Colorado have health insurance coverage. According to a new report released by All Kids Covered, *Crossing the Finish Line*, over 41,000 Colorado kids gained health insurance coverage between 2008 and 2010. The report attributes some of the progress of the last five years to policy changes that expanded coverage and reduced red tape, a streamlining and modernization of program administration, and the work of community advocates getting kids enrolled.

"It is encouraging that even in a tough economy, we, as a state, have made the commitment to get our children the health coverage and health care services they need to have healthy and fulfilling lives," said Cody Belzley, of the Colorado Children's Campaign. "In his State of the State speech, Governor Hickenlooper called on us to 'do right by our kids,' and this report shows that we are making significant progress toward that end."

However, more progress is needed, since state and national research surveys estimate that between 112,200 and 124,128 Colorado children remain uninsured. According to the All Kids Covered report, there are five key areas Colorado should focus on to close the gap:

1. Leadership and accountability that will continue the cross-sector, non-partisan work.
2. Coverage and access for all children through increased insurance options, provider availability, and opportunities to enroll.
3. Systems and practices that will maximize enrollment and retention, such as investments in the technical infrastructure and related processes to support the new Colorado Health Benefit Exchange.
4. Messaging and communications that are straightforward and consistent so that consumers can make smart choices about their coverage.
5. Regional adaptation of solutions for each of Colorado's diverse communities, from urban centers to remote frontier areas.

“It’s going to require that we come together as a state and agree that our children deserve the chance to reach their potential—the chance to grow into healthy adults who live, work, and thrive in every Colorado community,” said Gretchen Hammer, of the Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved. “It’s not too much to ask that all of Colorado’s kids have access to the health care they need, when they need it.”

One Colorado family that is in agreement is the Warrens, who have seen firsthand how having health coverage and access has changed their lives. In 2010, Aly and Jim took a big risk and left their secure jobs—and employer-sponsored health insurance—to pursue their professional dreams of being small business owners. Because of recent eligibility expansions, Aly, who is expecting the family’s second child this year, and Eva, the couple’s three-year-old daughter, were able to get health coverage through the Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+). Although Jim remains uninsured today, Aly says that health coverage for her and her daughter has provided much-needed peace of mind and security for their family.

“Thanks to CHP+ we have access to affordable, quality health care we need to keep our daughter healthy and ensure prenatal care for the newest member of our family,” said Aly Warren. “And CHP+ has also given us the security and peace of mind we need to pursue our professional goals of starting our own small businesses and growing our family.”

The full report can be downloaded at <http://www.allkidscoveredcolorado.org/report.pdf>. A four-page highlights document (<http://www.allkidscoveredcolorado.org/ReportHighlights.pdf>) and two-page summary (<http://www.allkidscoveredcolorado.org/ExecutiveSummary.pdf>) are also available for download.

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All Kids Covered Colorado is a statewide, non-partisan coalition dedicated to increasing access to affordable, high quality health insurance coverage and health care services for all children in Colorado. Since 2006, All Kids Covered has worked together with elected officials, health care leaders, state and county agency staff, and community-based organizations to improve, expand and protect health insurance options for children and families in Colorado.

Support for this report provided by The Colorado Trust, a grantmaking foundation dedicated to achieving access to health for all Coloradans.

www.allkidscoveredcolorado.org

All children in Colorado will have coverage through insurance or public programs that ensures access to a medical home providing appropriate and affordable health services.