



InsureKidsNow.gov

Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign

CAMPAIGN NOTES

Strategies to Address Mental Health Among Children and Teens & Resources to Get Them Access to Care

Mental health disorders usually first arise in childhood, adolescence, or early adulthood and can cause serious changes in the way children typically learn, behave, or handle their emotions. As children grapple with ongoing changes in their lives, it's crucial to make sure they have access to - and use - mental and behavioral health services. The growing emotional and behavioral health concerns among children, exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency, confirmed the critical need to integrate mental health services into standard healthcare practices. Considering the long-term effects on children's wellbeing, outreach underscoring coverage of essential mental and behavioral health services under Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) will be critical to promote year-round.

The COVID-19 public health crisis has created additional stressors such as disruption of familiar routines, schooling, and socialization, as well as economic and other impacts on children and families. According to a [Harvard University study](#), children experienced more clinically significant symptoms of anxiety, depression, hyperactivity, and inattention between November 2020 and January 2021. Additionally, between March and October 2020, compared to data from the same period in 2019, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services found that children insured by Medicaid and CHIP participated in [4.6 million \(21%\) fewer child screening services and 14 million \(34%\) fewer outpatient mental health services](#), even after accounting for the increased use of telehealth.

Medicaid and CHIP cover essential mental and behavioral health services for kids and teens up to age 19. Coverage includes mental and behavioral health services for children, as well as expectant mothers, to prevent, diagnose, and treat a broad range of mental health symptoms and disorders. Early intervention and access to these essential health care services can help children get through the day, stay active in summer activities and be prepared for the next school year. The Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign has a variety of resources focused on mental and behavioral health outreach available on [InsureKidsNow.gov](#).

Campaign in Action

The Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign hosts regular webinars to keep partners and grantees up to date with the latest tools and initiatives. The Campaign recently hosted the webinar, "[Promoting Mental and Behavioral Health Resources to Help Children and Teens Enroll in Coverage and Access Care](#)," that focused on the current landscape of mental health service usage for children and teens. Campaign partners discussed strategies and resources that can be used in outreach and enrollment efforts to promote mental health among children year-round.

- **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**

The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) is an organization of more than 67,000 pediatricians committed to the optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being of all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. Using humor and real-world conversations, AAP launched the [#CallYourPediatrician campaign](#), which aims to reach parents with timely reminders that going to the pediatrician, even during COVID-19, is important and safe.

- **Children's Hospital Association (CHA)**

The [Children's Hospital Association](#) (CHA) advances child health through innovation in the quality, cost and delivery of care within more than 220 children hospitals around the country. CHA and AAP launched a [behavioral health awareness campaign](#) to highlight the [escalating crisis among children and youth](#).

- **Massachusetts Department of Mental Health**

The [Massachusetts Department of Mental Health](#) recently launched the [Handhold MA](#) campaign developed to help parents and caregivers support children's mental health needs. The Handhold MA website allows parents to sort through resources by topic area and browse an array of free resources. These resources are also relevant to families outside of Massachusetts.

Campaign Resources

Visit the [Mental Health Initiative](#) page to find mental health resources, including a :15 second digital video, sample social media copy and graphics, template newsletters, and more. These tools can be used to encourage parents and caregivers to enroll their children in Medicaid and CHIP to access important mental health benefits once covered.

- ***Mental Health Video in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)***

These [videos](#) remind parents that Medicaid and CHIP cover mental and behavioral health care services. Use them on social media, post on websites, digital signage, and more!

- ***Social Media Content & Graphics in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)***

[Suggested copy](#) in English and Spanish can be used across platforms and tailored to be state specific. Social media posts direct online traffic to [InsureKidsNow.gov](#) where visitors can find more information on how to enroll in Medicaid and CHIP services and find a provider near them.

- ***[Text Messages](#) & [Template Newsletters](#) in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)***

Text messages and newsletters are a great way to help organizations engage with their existing audiences and encourage subscribers to visit the Campaign website or your organization's website for more information.

Upcoming Observances

School may be wrapping up, but the Campaign has a variety of [Back-to-School resources](#) as schools plan for the 2021-2022 school year.

Additional observances in June-August include:

- National Safety Month (June)
- National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month (July)
- Independence Day (July 4)

- National Youth Sports Week (July 19-25)
- National Immunization Awareness Month (August)
- Children's Eye Health & Safety Month (August)

Stay Connected with the Campaign

- **Share our Campaign materials.** Our ever-growing, multi-lingual [Outreach Tool Library](#) features a variety of targeted resources to use in your outreach and enrollment efforts, available in multiple formats.
- **Contact us.** To get more involved with the Campaign, contact us via email at ConnectingKids@cms.hhs.gov.
- **Follow the Campaign on Twitter.** Remember to re-tweet or share our messages from [@IKNGov](#) with your social network and be sure to use our #Enroll365 and #KidsEnroll hashtags in your posts.

Subscribe to the “Campaign Notes” eNewsletter

The Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign eNewsletter “[Campaign Notes](#)” is distributed throughout the year and provides updates on Campaign activities. If a friend or colleague forwarded this email to you, we invite you to [sign up](#) to receive this eNewsletter directly to your inbox.

