



Children's Defense Fund

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McDonald's, Clear Channel Outdoor and Children's Defense Fund Launch Statewide Valentine's Awareness Campaign to Enroll Children in Health Care Coverage

**McDonald's "CHIP trayliners" to be distributed in 14 cities, with 124 enrollment sites
and 88 billboards to be posted statewide**

HOUSTON, TX, February 14, 2006 – The Children's Defense Fund of Texas, Clear Channel Outdoor and McDonald's launched a statewide month-long campaign to enroll children in affordable health care coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

The need is urgent. There are 8.4 million uninsured children in America, and more than 1.4 million of them live here in Texas. 90% of these children have at least one working parent, but they cannot afford or do not receive health coverage through their employers. The average cost of private health insurance is \$933 a month, out of the reach of many low-income working families. Many families are unaware that low-cost health coverage is available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Children's Medicaid.

Vision, hospice and mental health benefits have been restored to the CHIP benefits package, premiums have been reduced and will be more convenient for families to pay, and additional funds have been allocated to increase enrollment. Dental benefits will be restored in Spring 2006. Over 180,000 Texas children lost CHIP in the last two years.

In an effort to connect more families to affordable health care, the Children's Defense Fund of Texas, in collaboration with Clear Channel Outdoor, McDonald's Operator Associations throughout Texas, CHIP regional coordinators and local businesses kicked off Valentine's Awareness Month - Give a Gift from the Heart - Children's Health Insurance. Statewide enrollment events will take place in 14 cities across the state to enroll eligible uninsured children in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Children's Medicaid.

Harris County Judge Robert Eckels stated, "CHIP is a good deal for Texas and for local taxpayers. Texas receives \$2.65 in federal matching funds for every \$1 invested in CHIP and \$1.56 for every \$1 invested in Medicaid. Children without health insurance often come to city or county health clinics or emergency rooms for care, at a staggering cost to local taxpayers."

More than 150 outreach events are planned across Texas during February to enroll eligible children in CHIP and Children's Medicaid.

- **McDonald's Restaurants** is holding statewide enrollment drives at 124 restaurants in 14 cities during the month of February. McDonald's has also distributed CHIP trayliners in over 1,260 restaurants in Texas.
- **Clear Channel Outdoor** is placing 88 Spanish and English CHIP billboards in neighborhoods with high numbers of uninsured children in four Texas cities.

Doug Adcock, President of the Board, McDonald's Operator Association of Greater Houston stated, "This month McDonald's has distributed bilingual CHIP tray-liners in 267 restaurants throughout the Houston area and over 1000 trayliners throughout TEXAS to inform families about the benefits and eligibility requirements for CHIP and Children's Medicaid."

"All of Texas children deserve affordable health care coverage. Yet every day Texas families with uninsured children are unnecessarily forced to make hard choices in caring for their kids. These sacrifices have far-reaching consequences for the 1.4 million Texas children who lack health insurance. Fortunately, many children in Texas are eligible for coverage through CHIP and Children's Medicaid. With this campaign, we hope to inform more parents that CHIP and Children's Medicaid can help them improve their children's health and quality of life," said **Barbara Best, Texas Director for the Children's Defense Fund**.

CHIP and Children's Medicaid provide comprehensive medical care, including regular checkups and immunizations, hospital care, surgery, x-rays, prescription drugs, dental care, vision, mental health care and emergency services. Parents of uninsured children can call toll-free 1-800-647-6558 to find out if their children are eligible for low-cost or free health care coverage. A family of four earning up to \$40,000 a year may qualify.

Please see the attached summary of statewide partners, sponsors and events.

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The mission of the **Children's Defense Fund** is to Leave No Child Behind and to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start* and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. Children's Defense Fund of Texas offices in Houston, Austin and the Rio Grande Valley work to ensure every child a *Healthy Start* in life and access to affordable health coverage.

*The **Gulf Coast CHIP Coalition** represents 650 members across a 16 county area and works to ensure that all of the region's children have access to affordable health care.*

**“Give a Gift from the Heart”
CDF TX Valentine’s Awareness Campaign 2006**

McDonald’s TRAYLINERS and Enrollments:

Participating City	Regional Coordinator	Sponsors	Enrollment Sites
Abilene	MOROCH	McDonald’s	Trayliners only
Amarillo	MOROCH	McDonald’s	27
Austin	Insure a kid	Univision 62; McDonald’s	8
Corpus Christi / Aransas, Beeville, Refugio	Driscoll Children’s Health Plan	McDonald’s	7
Dallas	Dallas Children’s Hospital	Amerigroup; All Smiles Dental, McDonald’s	20
Fort Worth	MOROCH	McDonald’s	10
El Paso	YWCA El Paso	McDonald’s	8
Houston	Children’s Defense Fund	McDonald’s Operator Association of Greater Houston; Gulf Coast CHIP Coalition	12
Lubbock	MOROCH	McDonald’s	21
San Angelo	MOROCH	McDonald’s	Trayliners only
San Antonio	United Way of San Antonio/Bexar County	McDonald’s	11
TOTAL 14 Cities			124 Statewide

Outdoor BILLBOARDS:

Participating City	Regional Coordinator	Sponsors	Post Date	Quantity
Austin	Insure a kid	Univision 62	1/30/06	6 English / 4 Spanish
Dallas / Fort Worth	Dallas Children’s Hospital	AMERIGROUP; All Smiles Dental; McDonald’s; Clear Channel Outdoor	1/23/06	25 English / 25 Spanish
El Paso	YWCA El Paso	Clear Channel Outdoor	1/30/06	4 English / 4 Spanish
Houston	Children’s Defense Fund	McDonald’s Operator Association of Greater Houston; Clear Channel Outdoor; Gulf Coast CHIP Coalition	1/30/06	10 English / 10 Spanish
TOTAL 4 Cities				88 Statewide (45 English, 43 Spanish)

- Billboards will post in targeted zip codes at the end of January and remain up through the end of February, provided space remains available.
- Trayliners appeared in McDonald’s restaurants beginning February 1 and will run for 2 weeks until the individual sign-up events.
- The sign up events began February 11 and will continue in various cities throughout the month.