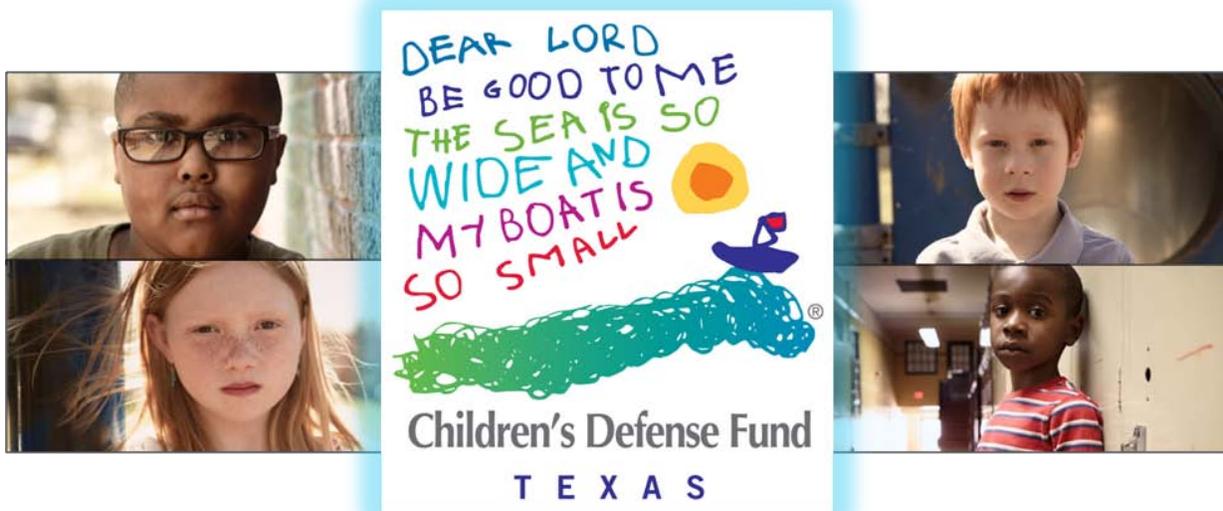


“IN PURSUIT OF JUSTICE FOR TEXAS CHILDREN”

A Multi-Faith Outreach Toolkit for Texas Faith Communities



**The 22nd Annual
National Observance of Children's Sabbaths® Celebration**
Friday, October 18 - Sunday, October 20, 2013

“Justice, justice shall you pursue”
(Deuteronomy 16:20)

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September 26, 2013

Dear Faithful Friend of Children,

Now more than ever, your faith, prayer, encouragement and action are needed to support CDF-Texas' mission to make healthcare accessible for all children.



With 1.2 million children lacking basic access to healthcare, Texas has the second highest rate of uninsured children in the nation. Of these 1.2 million children, more than half are eligible for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or Children's Medicaid but are not enrolled.

On October 1st, a new path to coverage will be open to millions of Texans, including nearly every Texas child. This new path, established by our nation's health reform law, is the Health Insurance Marketplace - a place where uninsured people can now find and compare new health care options at an affordable price. This is big news for Texas children and families!

Our faiths call on us to help the least among us, and especially to protect children. With everything we know about how Texas children are faring in terms of health, poverty, and gun violence, NOW is an important time to lift up our voices and take action. We CAN solve the problems facing our children. We already have solutions for healthcare coverage. And, working together, we can address and bring an end to child poverty and gun violence in our communities.

Join us in raising awareness about these important issues by participating in the **22nd Annual National Observance of Children's Sabbaths' Celebration** October 18-20, 2013 and by committing throughout the year to ensure that every Texas child has access to the *healthy start, head start, fair start, safe start and moral start* in life they need and deserve.

This Multi-Faith Outreach Toolkit includes sample pulpit announcements, articles, and other useful tools that we hope you will find helpful in promoting children's wellbeing in your congregation.

Thank you for your commitment, prayer, and action to serve our most precious and vulnerable resource—our children.

In faith, hope, and peace,

Beth E. Quill, MPH
Texas Executive Director, Children's Defense Fund

CDF National Observance of Children's Sabbaths® Celebration

- Every third weekend in October, CDF-Texas invites faith leaders from across the state to join together to renew a commitment to children.
- A Children's Sabbath weekend typically has four elements:
 - The service of worship or prayer
 - Educational programs
 - Activities
 - Follow-up actions
- The Children's Sabbath is guided by a multi-faith advisory committee, and is endorsed by hundreds of denominations and religious organizations nationwide which include: Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Jewish, Báhá'í, and Sikh members.
- The focus of our 2013 Texas Children's Sabbath is how each of us can ensure that every Texas child has a *Healthy Start* in life and successful transition to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.
- Special focus areas also address: *Child Poverty* and *Protecting Children, Not Guns*.



Child Health in Texas

Key Facts

The Problem:

- Of the 7.3 million children in Texas, **1.2 million (15.4%) are uninsured.**
- More than **half** are eligible **right now** for CHIP or Children's Medicaid but are not signed up.

Solution:

- Today, CHIP and Children's Medicaid provide low-cost or free health insurance to children in low- to middle- income working families. All they need to do is sign up at www.yourtexasbenefits.com.
- And, starting October 1, when the Health Insurance Marketplace opens, almost every child in the state of Texas will have a path to affordable coverage at www.healthcare.gov.

Together, We CAN Help Texas Children Get Covered:

1. **Enroll children in health coverage:** Congregations are encouraged to help inform families about the low-cost or free health coverage that is available through CHIP and Children's Medicaid. Contact Children's Defense Fund-Texas for more information.
2. **Help families to renew their children's coverage:** Children must re-enroll every year to keep their CHIP and Medicaid coverage. Congregations are invited to help inform parents about renewing their coverage so that children do not lose critical access to medical care.
3. **Advocate for children's health coverage:** Children's Defense Fund-Texas raises awareness about the condition of Texas children, and connects children and families to programs and services that help meet their needs. CDF- Texas also works with partners statewide to coordinate broad support and form policy solutions for legislative action on behalf of children. **Come join us!**

83rd Texas Legislative Session Updates:

Every child deserves a healthy start in life; part of that means access to affordable health coverage. During this legislative session CDF-Texas sought to increase coverage for children and families by protecting [Medicaid and CHIP](#). Medicaid and CHIP, when combined, provide needed and affordable health care to 50 percent of our state's children. CDF also worked to create new coverage options for low-income adults, and advocated to protect consumers from unjustified increases in premiums. The good news for Texas children is that Medicaid and CHIP were largely protected. Unfortunately, despite our aggressive advocacy efforts, the Governor stopped a popular bipartisan proposal to extend Medicaid coverage to 1.5 million uninsured Texans—400,000 of them children. We will continue to campaign until ALL Texas children and families have affordable health care.

For more about our policy work, visit www.texaswellandhealthy.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Join us in the fight to protect health care for Texas children and families.



90th Psalm for Child Advocates

O God, who has been our dwelling place in all generations for whom a thousand years are like yesterday and life a watch in the night in Your sight.

Teach us to count our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom and raise our voices for justice.

Let your work be manifest in Your servants and Your glorious power to their children.

Let Your favor be upon us and prosper for us the work of our hands O prosper the work of our hands for our children's sake.

-Hold My Hand: Prayers for Building a Movement to Leave No Child Behind® by Marian Wright Edelman

Protect Children, Not Guns

Key Facts

- A **child** is injured, or dies from guns **every 30 minutes**.
- Guns **end the lives** of **seven children** and teens every day in America.
- In the United States, guns **killed** more **preschoolers** in one year than law enforcement officers **in the line of duty**.
- The number of children and teens killed by guns in one year would fill **134 classrooms** with 20 students each.
- Over the past 50 years, **three times more** children and teens died from guns on **American soil** than U.S. soldiers were **killed** in action **in wars abroad**.
- The U.S. has **over 10 times** more gun deaths of children and teens than other **first world countries**.
- More than **one in five** teenagers has **witnessed** a shooting.
- Black, Hispanic, American Indian and Alaska Native children and teens are **disproportionately** likely to **die** or be **injured** by guns.



[God] shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.

(Micah 4:1-5)

WE CAN DO BETTER.

If we're going to win the fight to "*protect children, not guns*", it is going to take mothers, fathers, communities of faith, and **EVERYONE** who believes that our children's right to live, learn and grow up safely must be protected before our gun rights. Children make up 25% of our present and 100% of our future.

www.childrensdefense.org/dobetter

Child Poverty

Key Facts

- In 2011, of the more than **16.1 million** poor children in America, **1.95 million** (11.9%) of them were in Texas.
- Children continue to be our poorest age group in the country. In 2011, **22%** of the nation's children were poor; for comparison **26.7%** of children in Texas were considered poor.
- Children have suffered **more than any other age group** during the recession.
- Over **seven million** children – **one in ten** – lived in **extreme poverty** in 2011.
 - **Extreme poverty** is defined as an annual income of **less than half** of the poverty level, or **\$11,511** for a family of four. This means a family of four living in **extreme poverty** lives on **less than \$959 a month**, \$221 a week, or \$32 a day.
- In 2011, **one in four** infants, toddlers and preschoolers were poor, at the very same time that their **brains** are rapidly **developing** and attention to their **developmental needs** is so important.
- Nearly **two-thirds** of all poor children – approximately **10.3 million** – lived in **single-parent** families, with single-mother families which face some of the **greatest** challenges.
- Children of **color** continue to suffer **unduly** from poverty, with the youngest children of color most **at-risk** of being poor. The same patterns hold true for children of color living in **extreme poverty**.



“Whatsoever you do to the least of My children, that you do unto Me.”

“De cierto os digo que en cuanto hicisteis a uno de Mis hermanos más pequeños, a Mi me lo hicisteis.”

(Matthew 25:40)

For more on
how Texas children fare

<http://www.cdftexas.org/research-library/documents/children-in-the-states-texas.pdf>

SAMPLE NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Please feel free to cut and paste these important messages about kid's health into your congregation's bulletin or newsletter. If there are any questions, don't hesitate to contact CDF-Texas at 713-664-4080.

Word count: Approximately 75 Words

Title: Does Your Child or Teen Need Health Insurance?

With CHIP/Medicaid They Will be Ready for Whatever the School Year Brings

Children in a family of four earning up to \$47,100 a year may qualify for free or low-cost health insurance through CHIP/Medicaid. With health insurance, kids can get the immunizations, check-ups, eye exams, dental visits and other care they may need to fully participate in classroom and after-school activities.

For more information, visit www.yourtexasbenefits.com or call 2-1-1, pick a language and then dial 2.

Word count: Approximately 250 Words

Title: Does Your Child or Teen Need Health Insurance?

With CHIP/Medicaid They Will be Ready for Whatever the School Year Brings

As a parent, you want to do everything you can to be sure your child is prepared for whatever the school year brings – including having the required physicals and immunizations. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 7 out of 10 children aged 5 to 17 years missed one or more school days due to illness or injury; many of these illnesses and injuries can be prevented with proper healthcare.

Children who have health coverage are less likely to miss school because of sickness. Your child or teen may be eligible for free or low-cost health insurance through CHIP/Medicaid. The health benefits from Medicaid/CHIP will get them the necessary care for school which includes physicals and eye exams! A family of four with children or teens that earns up to \$47,100 a year may qualify. With CHIP/Medicaid, they can get care they may need to fully participate in classroom and after-school activities.

To see if your child is eligible, visit www.yourtexasbenefits.com or call 2-1-1, pick a language and then dial 2. With health insurance, children and teens can be ready for whatever the school year brings, which is one less thing that parents have to worry about.



**To find out how YOUR congregation
can plan and host
a CHIP/ Medicaid Sign-up Drive,
call CDF-Texas at: 713-664-4080**

Sample Bulletin, Pulpit and Social Media Announcements

Please feel free to share these important messages about kid's health with members of your congregation.

Sample Announcements

Children's Medicaid & CHIP

If your family of 4 makes about \$47,000 your kids might be eligible for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or Children's Medicaid. Depending on your income, you could cover all your kids for no more than \$50 a year, but many families pay nothing. To see if you qualify, call 1-877-534-7669 or click yourtexasbenefits.com

Health Insurance Marketplace

The new Health Insurance Marketplace (part of Obamacare) begins October 1. If you or someone you know needs health insurance or to see if you qualify for lower costs, visit healthcare.gov or call 1-800-318-2596.

Advocacy

If you care about kids' health, join the Children's Defense Fund-Texas in campaigning for FULL funding of Medicaid and CHIP. Call 1 (877) 664-4080 or sign up for updates at texaswellandhealthy.org to get involved.

Sample Twitter Tweets

Remind families to put #KidsCoverage on their Back-to-School checklist. Get tools at go.cms.gov/18B0AdO

Healthy kids are better prepared to learn. Join #CMS to connect kids to #Coverage this Back-to-School season: go.cms.gov/18B0AdO

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] supports the Connecting Kids to #Coverage Campaign to get kids insured. Learn how you can help. go.cms.gov/18B0AdO

#CMS Connecting Kids to #Coverage TV & radio PSAs help eligible kids get #Medicaid and #CHIP. Download at go.cms.gov/17RxJIA

Help eligible kids enroll in #Medicaid and #CHIP. #CMS TV & radio PSAs available in English and Spanish at go.cms.gov/17RxJIA

The new Health Insurance Marketplace is here! Explore your new, low-cost health care options at healthcare.gov #LetsEnrollTX

Questions about enrolling in the Marketplace? Visit LocalHelp.HealthCare.gov to find help in your area. #GetCovered

Sample Facebook Posts

Healthy kids are better prepared to learn in school. Help spread the word about free and low-cost health insurance programs for kids in your state. go.cms.gov/18B0AdO

Families can call 1-877-KIDS-NOW to see if their kids are eligible for free or low-cost health insurance. Spread the word! go.cms.gov/18B0AdO

TV and radio PSAs from the *Connecting Kids to Coverage* National Campaign are helping eligible kids enroll in Medicaid and CHIP. View at go.cms.gov/17RxJIA

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] is joining with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) *Connecting Kids to Coverage* campaign to find and enroll eligible, uninsured children and teens in free or low-cost health insurance. You can help! Visit go.cms.gov/18B0AdO to learn more.

The Health Insurance Marketplace is a great place to connect your kids, and the whole family to affordable health coverage. Visit healthcare.gov to learn about and compare your options.

Exciting news! The Health Insurance Marketplace is now open. The Marketplace provides Americans with a new way to compare and shop for health insurance that fits their budget. You can visit healthcare.gov for more info. **What does getting covered mean to you? Let us know in the comments below.**

Help families connect to coverage for their kids from your website! Paste these tiles on your site and link to yourtexasbenefits.com

Families making up to \$44,000 or more may qualify.

CHIP Children's Medicaid

Las familias que ganan \$44,000 o más podrían recibir beneficios.

CHIP Children's Medicaid

\$50 a year covers all your kids. See if you qualify.

CHIP Children's Medicaid

Con \$50 o menos asegura a todos sus niños por un año. ¿Ve si puede recibir beneficios?

CHIP Children's Medicaid

Link from your website to Healthcare.gov using this tile!

Health Insurance Marketplace

Need health coverage? The Health Insurance Marketplace is open! ▶

Children's Health Care Success Stories

MARICELL'S STORY

For Maricell's parents, employer-sponsored coverage for their son would cost **30 percent** of their income. Maricell has juvenile diabetes, which previously made Maricell uninsurable in the private market. Thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Maricell is able to get the care he needs and save taxpayer's money by avoiding trips to the emergency room. Maricell is a child of God and as such deserves to be insured under an affordable care plan, which will soon be possible for a lot more families through the new Health Insurance Marketplace at www.healthcare.gov.



SAMANTHA'S STORY

While riding home from a skating rink with friends, Samantha was involved in a tragic car accident. Her friends had a broken leg and a broken rib, but Samantha was less fortunate. She was rushed to the hospital and placed in the ICU with brain trauma and serious damage to her liver. Doctors said that Samantha would not make it and if she did, the brain damage would be so severe she would no longer recognize her own parents.

Miraculously, Samantha made a full recovery and is still with us today because of skilled doctors, prayer, and the **CHIP program**. She managed to return to school four weeks after the accident and missed only one question on her state test.

Samantha's mother is grateful for the care that CHIP provided. CHIP allowed her to focus on Samantha's care without the added burden of worrying about medical costs. Without CHIP, the cost of the hospital bill for treating Samantha's injuries would have been \$67,000. Parents can apply for CHIP or Medicaid for their children at www.yourtexasbenefits.com.



*Each baby is the gift of God
Each baby is the image of God
Each baby is the glory of God
Each child is new hope for the future
Which is now for generations to come.*

*A new baby is born
A new gift of life
A new gift of love
A new gift of joy
A new gift of hope
Make us good stewards of Your faith in the future.*

*-Hold My Hand:
Prayers for Building a Movement to Leave No Child Behind® by Marian Wright Edelman*

National Organizations Endorsing Children's Sabbaths

- Catholic Charities U.S.A.
- Islamic Society of North America
- National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.
- National Assembly of Bahá'ís in the U.S.
- Sikh Council on Religion and Education
- Union for Reform Judaism
- United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
- And more than 200 other religious organizations and denominations



A Prayer of Gratitude for Those Who Serve All Your Children

Thank You, God, for [giving] pats of reassurance to the despairing and needy young and caresses of protective welcome to newborn babes.

Thank You, God for caring and discerning eyes that pierce through youthful violent bravado and respond to the vulnerable inner child crying out for attention.

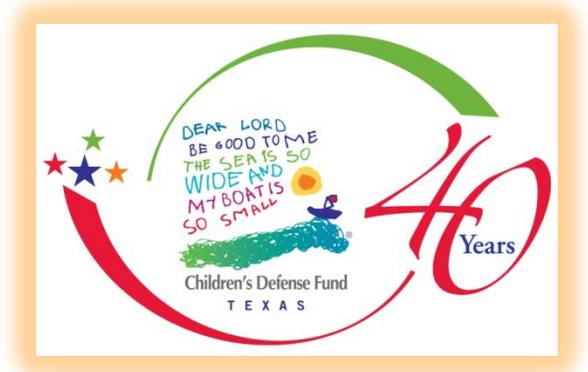
Thank You, God, for those who see Your presence in every child's smile, behind every child's skin, and in every child's mind who find Your hope in every child's dream and Your love in every child's heart.

Thank you, God, for caring spirits that feel and rejoice in Your daily gifts of life of nurture and of family and of friends and of work and of worship.

-Excerpts from Hold My Hand: Prayers for Building a Movement to Leave No Child Behind® by Marian Wright Edelman

About Children's Defense Fund

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) is a nonprofit child advocacy organization that has worked relentlessly for **40 years** to ensure a level-playing field for all children. We champion policies and programs that lift children out of poverty, protect them from abuse and neglect, and ensure their access to healthcare, quality education and a moral and spiritual foundation.



The CDF **Leave No Child Behind® mission** is 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.

CDF provides a strong, effective and independent voice for *all* the children of America who cannot vote, lobby or speak for themselves.

About Children's Defense Fund-Texas

Children's Defense Fund-Texas (CDF-Texas) includes offices in **Houston, Austin**, and the **Rio Grande Valley** region in South Texas along the Mexican border. Our current advocacy priorities include: child health, child poverty, education, youth leadership development, and juvenile justice.

CDF-Texas' work has been **recognized nationally and internationally** as outstanding by many organizations including: **World Health Organization** • **U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services** • **U.S. Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services** • **American Association of School Administrators** • **Anti-Defamation League** • **American Leadership Forum** • **America's Promise Alliance** • **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** • **Texas Association of Partners in Education**.

Our Programs and Campaigns

- All Healthy Children Campaign
- The Texas Well and Healthy Campaign
- CDF Freedom Schools® Program
- CDF Cradle to Prison Pipeline® Campaign
- CDF Beat the Odds® Scholarship Program
- Young Advocates Leadership Training® (YALT Program)
- CDF National Observance of Children's Sabbaths® Celebrations

To learn more about CDF-Texas visit cdf texas.org or call 1-877-664-4080.

Children's Defense Fund-Texas Staff

HOUSTON

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Texas Executive Director

Cecilia Joseph
Director of Operations

Anat Kelman Shaw, MPA
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Vicki Johnson
Texas Deputy Director

Brandi Brown
Texas Youth Development Director

Brandy Taylor Dédé
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Summer 2013 Intern

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Pen-Chieh Pan
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Courtney Watson
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Rachel Malhiet
Summer 2013 Intern

Hannah Guernsey
Summer 2013 Intern

Samira Noorali
Fall 2013 Intern

Christopher Jordan
Fall 2013 Intern

RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Graciela Camarena
Outreach Coordinator

Patricia Pena
Outreach Program Assistant

Service is the rent
we pay for living. It is the very
purpose of life, and not
something you do in your spare time.

— Marian Wright Edelman

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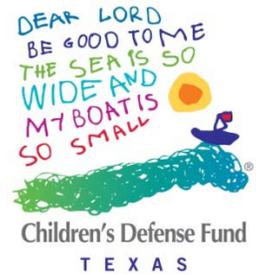
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Participation Form

For the 22nd Annual National Observance
of Children's Sabbaths® Celebration
October 18 - 20, 2013

● ● ●



Please complete and return via E-mail (cdf-texas@childrensdefense.org) or Fax (713-664-1975)

Your Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Day Phone: _____ Alternate phone: _____

Place of Worship: _____ Congregation size (approx): _____

Congregation Leader: _____ Phone: _____

Youth Leader/Program Director: _____ Phone: _____

Please add me to your E-mail list

YES! My Congregation Will Participate in *Children's Sabbath* and Commit to:

- Make Pulpit announcements** – about the importance of children's health and wellbeing using the materials provided.
- Distribute flyers** through email blast or handouts during worship service – using the materials provided.
- Be a Social Media Ambassador** – talk about the importance of child health coverage on your congregational Facebook or Twitter page. Use CDF's data on child health, poverty and gun violence.
- Bulletin/Newsletter announcements** - include messages about child health and how to sign up for coverage.
- Deliver a Sermon** on the importance of child health coverage and how/where to sign up.
- Provide CHIP/Medicaid application assistance** at your place of worship. CDF can provide training.
- Host an Enrollment Drive** (a single weekend or a recurring event). CDF can provide training.
- Support CDF's important work with a tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____.**
- Other _____.**