



Children's Defense Fund–Texas

All Healthy Children Campaign

Together, We Can Ensure a Healthy Start for Every Texas Child

CDF-Texas' *All Healthy Children Campaign* is an award-winning school-based child health outreach model that works to identify uninsured children and connects eligible, uninsured children to affordable healthcare. Our unique approach has been recognized as a national best practice by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

In 2016, CDF-Texas was awarded a federal CHIPRA grant and a grant from Episcopal Health Foundation to work with early childhood centers and partners in rural counties of South and East Texas that have stubbornly high numbers of uninsured and some of the worst indicators for health and mental health.

When children's basic health needs are met, communities do better. We all do better. The challenges facing Texas children are urgent and impact all of us. However, together, there is no problem caring adults cannot solve. Every step we take to improve the lives of children, improves the lives of all of us.

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Healthy Children do Better in School and in Life.

Brandon, a six-year-old in the Houston Independent School District, had two working parents until his father was laid off. Brandon lost his health insurance when his father lost his job. Brandon's mother scrambled to try to enroll her son who has asthma in new coverage, but met some obstacles and didn't know where to turn.

The school district, which had been working with the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) and AASA (The School Superintendents Association), through a partnership supported by The Atlantic Philanthropies, stepped in and helped her find coverage for Brandon under the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). With his new health coverage, doctors discovered Brandon also had high blood pressure and prescribed medicine to control it. Now the school nurse monitors his blood pressure every day and Brandon is healthy and happy to be in school learning.

Watch Brandon's story:
<https://youtu.be/kfOsTooHLBY>



Children's Defense Fund-Texas is the Texas state office of the Children's Defense Fund, a national, nonprofit child advocacy organization that has worked for more than 40 years to level the playing field for every child. For nearly two decades in Texas we have worked to lift up the needs of children, and protect and strengthen state level public policies to end child poverty and ensure every child has a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start*, and a *Moral Start* in life. www.cdf-texas.org

Our leadership in ensuring a healthy start for Texas children has earned national and international recognitions, most recently by the U.S. Department of Health and U.S. Department of Education as a *High Impact Opportunity* for schools and local jurisdictions to help strengthen their activities that link health and learning.

We welcome your participation as we continue to address our state's highest in the nation rate of uninsured children, and ensure every child has what they need to grow and thrive, especially during early childhood, the period of most rapid brain development.



It all begins with a simple question.

To understand the scope of the problem of uninsured children, CDF-Texas worked with administrators at Houston ISD, Edinburg CISD, and others, to add a simple health insurance question to annual school enrollment forms. Once we could identify areas of need we could target outreach to inform and connect eligible, uninsured children and families to health coverage.

The project's many successes led to national partnerships with AASA — The Superintendents Association, and the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, that have enabled us to reach uninsured children and families across the country.

Twenty school districts in Harris County, 15 in the Rio Grande Valley, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, and in states like California, Georgia, and Mississippi, have: (1) added the question to school enrollment forms, (2) identified students in need of assistance, (3) targeted follow-up to families on how to apply, use and renew coverage, and (4) referred families who do not qualify to alternative clinic resources.



Why Must We Still Connect Kids to Coverage?

With the success of programs like CHIP and Children's Medicaid that provide a healthcare safety net for millions of children in low to moderate income families, significant gains have been made to reduce our number of uninsured children. In fact, today, more children than ever are covered thanks to Medicaid, CHIP and the Affordable Care Act. Despite significant progress, healthcare for children and the poor is under constant threat, and Texas has unacceptably high numbers of uninsured children — the highest in the U.S. — especially among children of color.

Local Businesses Can Help

For more than a decade, Texas grocery chain Fiesta Mart Inc. was an important partner in our efforts to connect kids to coverage through sign-up events in their stores. During these events, trained volunteers would help families apply for or renew coverage and navigate enrollment challenges while they shopped for groceries. In 2011 our Fiesta partnership was federally recognized for Excellence in Children's Health Outreach and Enrollment, and in 2013 was featured in a video story shared nationwide.

Healthy Families → Healthy Children → Healthy Communities

CDF-Texas brings together advocates for healthy children at the Capitol and in communities across Texas. We offer **FREE workshops, trainings and presentations** on CHIP, Children's Medicaid, and the ACA and provide technical assistance and support to groups working to ensure every child a healthy start.



Schools Are Important Partners in the Effort to #InsureAllChildren

Schools, Preschools, and Daycares can help make sure all children are Happy, Healthy and Ready to learn!

Download the toolkit: www.InsureAllChildren

Tips to Help Children and Families You Serve

Understand the need: Survey the families you serve. Ask if children have health insurance.

Expand your toolbox: Become familiar with and better understand the programs that help uninsured children and families get the care they need.

Share information: Most uninsured families don't know what's available or that they even qualify, and may feel discouraged or embarrassed to ask.

Provide support: Host annual, quarterly, semester information and enrollment sessions. Make it routine.

Connect: Partner with or refer to like-minded groups to help build a network of support for the families you serve.

Promote year-round: Children can enroll in CHIP or Medicaid anytime, 365 days a year. Promote during Back-to-School, Open Enrollment, holidays or allergy/asthma season for extra impact.

The Children's Defense Fund 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.



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