

First 5 San Joaquin Children's Health Initiative

BACKGROUND

It is estimated that one third of uninsured children in California do not qualify for federal and state health insurance programs.¹ To address this gap in coverage, 25 counties in California, including San Joaquin County, have formed a Children's Health Initiative (CHI). These initiatives work in two ways to improve access to care for children. They seek to increase enrollment in state and federal insurance (Medi-Cal and Healthy Families) for those who are eligible for such programs, while also expanding locally funded health insurance programs (known as Healthy Kids) for those children who are not eligible, due to family income level or undocumented immigrant status.

Since July 2003, First 5 San Joaquin has supported the county's CHI, known as the Health Plan of San Joaquin Healthy Kids program, focusing its funding on increasing outreach, enrollment, retention and utilization among children ages 0-5. With annual funding of approximately \$700,000 per year, San Joaquin Healthy Kids pursues the following activities:

- Markets the CHI through radio, television, print and billboard campaigns.
- Trains community agencies and school staff on the CHI and One-e-App system.
- Coordinates with agencies and schools, including First 5 contractors, to maintain a collaborative outreach and enrollment effort.
- Identifies opportunities for improving access and utilization.
- Follows up with families to increase health insurance utilization and retention.

First 5 San Joaquin's investment in Healthy Kids has also enabled the program to leverage funds from both The California Endowment and Blue Shield, resulting in more health insurance money to support the local Healthy Kids program.

The Health Plan of San Joaquin Healthy Kids contract is renewed annually based upon successful outcomes. The current contract is scheduled to end June 2009 and future funding is uncertain.

EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS

Over the four-year funding period:

- + First 5 San Joaquin contractors screened over 20,000 children ages 0-5 for health insurance. Of those who were screened, 14% (2,880) did not have health insurance and were referred to Healthy Kids, Medi-Cal or Healthy Families.
- + The San Joaquin Healthy Kids program has enrolled over 1,800 children 0-5 in Healthy Kids, thereby reducing the number of uninsured children in the county.
- + Trend data from the San Joaquin Healthy Kids program show an increase in the percentage of children ages 0-5 utilizing primary care, dental and developmental services.

Study Confirms that CHIs Are a Success

A recent study assessing CHIs in nine counties, including San Joaquin County, found positive impacts with regards to children's access to primary care.² The study found that:

- Healthy Kids increases low-income children's access to primary care, therefore decreasing their chance of hospitalizations for preventable illnesses and manageable conditions.
- Healthy Kids helped prevent over 1,000 hospitalizations each year from 2000 to 2005.
- This reduction saves the State of California and the federal government up to \$7.3 million annually in hospital costs.

*County-specific data was not included in the report.

¹ Outcomes from Children's Health Initiatives in California, Center for Community Health Studies, USC, March 2007

² Covering California's Kids Evaluation, Center for Community Health Studies at USC, December 2007.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

For this evaluation report, program level data focusing on outcomes related to children ages 0-5 were collected from the San Joaquin Healthy Kids program. Findings are presented from the most recent year of data collection (2007) as well as trend data comparing the four years that the program has received funding from First 5 San Joaquin.

Application Assistance

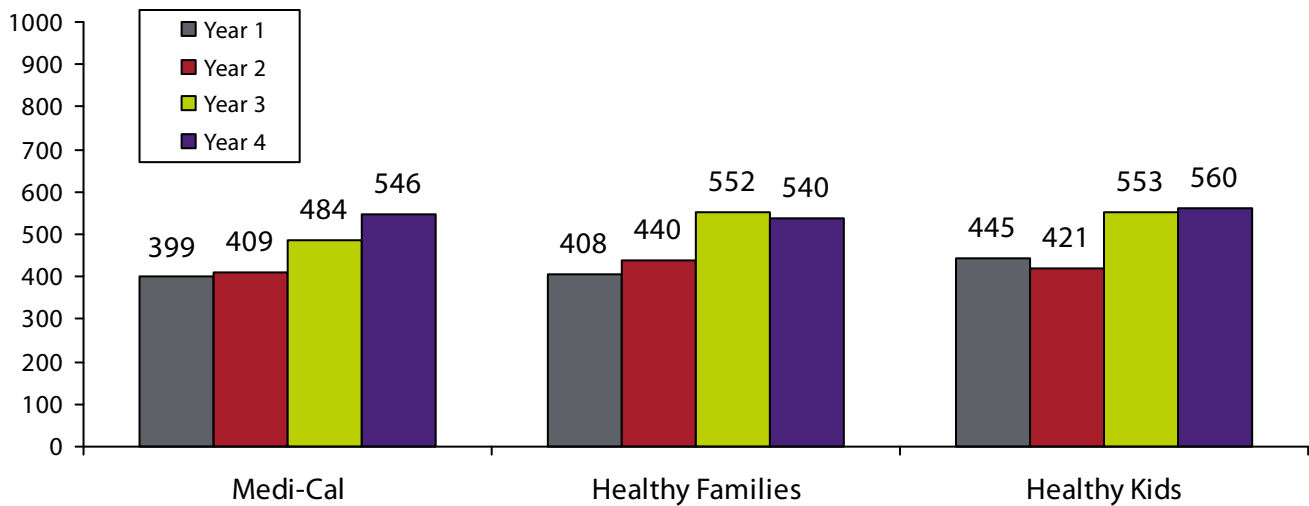
In an effort to increase enrollment, San Joaquin Healthy Kids trains community agency and school staff throughout the county on the CHI and One-e-App system. From July 2007 to March 2008, 240 staff were trained to assist families with their health insurance application. Additionally, 35 staff representing seven agencies and 12 sites throughout the county were trained to become Certified Application Assistants (CAAs), an increase from only 8 CAAs in June 2007.

What is One-e-App?

One-e-App is a Web-based application and eligibility determination tool for families seeking health insurance. This tool:

- Provides real-time selection of a provider and a health plan and real-time submission of applications for final eligibility determination
- Is used by Certified Application Assistants, eligibility workers, case managers and administrators

Number of Families with Children 0-5 Assisted with Health Insurance Applications, Years 1-4



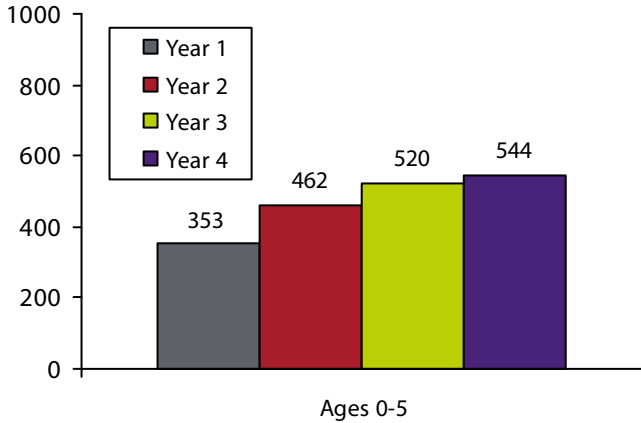
- The number of families with young children receiving application assistance has increased over time for Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, and Healthy Kids applications.
- From year one to year four over 1,800 families received assistance with Medi-Cal, over 1,900 received assistance with Healthy Families, and close to 2,000 families received assistance with Healthy Kids.
- As of March 2007, 12 community based agencies are using the One-e-App system to process applications.



Enrollment

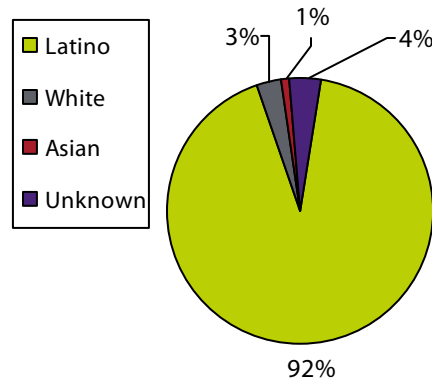
After a family is entered into One-e-App, their information is then transmitted to the appropriate agency for final determination of eligibility. In many cases, additional paperwork may need to be submitted and families need to sign their application and send in their premium.

Number of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Healthy Kids, Years 1-4



- The number of children 0-5 enrolled in Healthy Kids has increased each year, for a total increase from year one to year four of 54%.
- In year four, 544 children 0-5 enrolled in Healthy Kids.

Ethnicity of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Healthy Kids, Year 4 (n=544)



- The ethnic breakdown of children enrolled in Healthy Kids in year four was very similar to that of children enrolled in years one to three, with the vast majority (92%) identifying as Latino.

Top Ten Zip Codes of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Healthy Kids, Year 4 (n=544)

Zip Code	City	Number of Children Enrolled in Healthy Kids*
1. 95206	Stockton	81
2. 95205	Stockton	79
3. 95240	Lodi	65
4. 95207	Stockton	41
5. 95336	Manteca	39
6. 95215	Stockton	37
7. 95203	Stockton	25
8. 95376	Tracy	24
9. 95210	Stockton	24
10. 95337	Manteca	23

*Numbers do not add to 544 because only the top ten are listed.

- As seen in the table above, Healthy Kids enrollment spans San Joaquin County, with most families living in Stockton, followed by Lodi, Manteca, and Tracy.



Utilization

Upon enrollment, children are sent a medical card with their doctor's name and phone number. Staff then follow up with families to encourage them to utilize and retain their insurance. From July 2007-March 2008, 3,500 follow-up calls were made to families to provide them with information on how and when to utilize their insurance, and 2,000 calls were made to remind families to renew their health insurance.

Utilization Rates for Children 0-5 Enrolled in Healthy Kids , Years 1-4					
	Year 1 (n=353)	Year 2 (n=462)	Year 3 (n=520)	Year 4 (n=544)	Percentage point change Year 1-Year 4
Initial health assessment within 90 days (child taken to doctor for a health assessment within 90 days of enrollment)	37%	38%	43%	42%	+5
Primary care provider visit (child taken to doctor)	58%	65%	68%	70%	+12
Developmental assessment* (child's doctor conducted a developmental assessment)	44%	50%	56%	58%	+14
Dental care (child taken to dentist)	28%	29%	30%	43%	+15
Emergency room (child taken to ER)	**	13%	14%	12%	-1

*Includes an assessment of speech, cognitive function (if a concern), gross and fine motor skills and self help skills.

**n is too low to report percentage

- The table above shows that utilization of a number of health services by Healthy Kids recipients increased from year one to year four, with the largest increases seen in the proportion of children receiving dental care and developmental assessments.
- There was a 12 percentage point increase in the proportion of children taken to their primary care provider. It was also noted that the most common reason that children were taken to their doctor was for a routine infant or child health check (data not shown).
- The table above also shows a slight decrease from year one to year four in the proportion of children taken to the emergency room.

Retention

The San Joaquin Healthy Kids insurance product, like the federal and state programs, requires re-enrollment every year. Because continuity of insurance coverage is a factor in regular utilization of health care, the retention of families from one year to the next is another identified indicator of program impact.

- Sixty percent of year three families renewed their applications in year four. This is a decrease from year two when 73% of families renewed their applications in year three.

In considering the data, it is important to recognize that the tracking of retention is complicated because there are numerous reasons why a family may not re-enroll that are outside of the influence of the Healthy Kids program and are unrelated to program quality or outreach efforts. These reasons could include relocation out of the area, change in family income or citizenship, acquiring of employer-provided insurance, or simply that the child has 'aged-out' of the data set at age six. Because the Healthy Kids program has been unable to follow up with families who have not re-enrolled, it is not clear what the motivating factor was that kept them from doing so.

Barriers to Care and Strategies to Address Them

The San Joaquin Healthy Kids program works with families to identify barriers to health care utilization and retention. The program then collaborates with agencies, schools and key stakeholders to develop strategies to address the identified barriers. The following table demonstrates the barriers to care that have been identified as well as the services that the Healthy Kids program as well as other First 5 contractors provide to address them.

Barriers	Strategies
Transportation	Assist with local transportation (bus vouchers and schedules)
Money	Provide hardship funds, discounts for annual premium payment
Language	Work with bilingual staff to make appointments
Lack of knowledge and awareness	Send out mailers, conduct home visits and make telephone calls to educate and encourage preventive care and health insurance retention

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

These findings suggest that the Health Plan of San Joaquin Healthy Kids program is a success. Over the four-year funding period, the program has enrolled over 1,800 children 0-5 in Healthy Kids and trend data indicate an increase in health insurance utilization. Additionally, more than 20,000 families with children 0-5 have been screened for health insurance.

Based upon these findings, it is recommended that the San Joaquin Healthy Kids program:

- + Continue to provide outreach and enrollment assistance to families with children 0-5 in need of health insurance.
- + Continue to provide follow up assistance to families on both health care utilization as well as health care retention.
- + Develop a consistent definition of retention for data collection and analysis purposes.

In consideration of anticipated funding challenges due to the uncertainty of First 5 funding in 2009 (and the overall financial climate of the state), it is also recommended that the San Joaquin Healthy Kids program:

- + Work with their CHI Oversight Committee on a contingency plan in order to continue to sustain health coverage for children ages 0-5.



Health Plan of San Joaquin Contact Information

Please contact the Health Plan of San Joaquin for additional information on Healthy Families, Healthy Kids and Medi-Cal.

1-888-936-PLAN (7526) (English)

1-888-312-PLAN (7526) (Spanish)

<http://www.hpsj.com/english> (English)

<http://www.hpsj.com/spanish> (Spanish)