



CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

A Voice for Washington's Children, Youth & Families

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NATIONAL FOUNDATION MARKS CHILDREN'S HEALTH ANNIVERSARY WITH GRANT TO HELP COVER MORE WASHINGTON KIDS

Packard Foundation Cites Children's Alliance's Critical Role in Continued Progress

Feb. 21, 2011 – Today, the Children's Alliance announces its receipt of a \$120,000 grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation under the Foundation's Insuring America's Children: Getting to the Finish Line initiative.

This grant coincides with the two-year anniversary of the reauthorization of the federal Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and will support the Children's Alliance in its work to advance policies and best practices that can help cover Washington children.

Health coverage through Apple Health for Kids, our state's Medicaid and CHIP program, allows children to get the preventive care they need to stay healthy and see a doctor when sick or injured. The benefits of these programs extend well beyond a child's health, preserving parents' economic stability and ensuring that schoolchildren can focus on learning – not on what's ailing them.

"The Children's Alliance has helped to deliver real wins for Washington children, and because Washington has strengthened Medicaid and CHIP, thousands of Washington children can get the care they need." said Carol S. Larson, president and CEO of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

Even during these tough economic times, the number of uninsured children statewide has dropped over the last two years, from 4.6 to 3.4 percent, thanks in no small part to Apple Health for Kids.

"Covering all kids made good sense in good times; it makes even better sense now," says Jon Gould, Deputy Director of the Children's Alliance. "Thousands of Washington families have turned to Apple Health for Kids as a lifeline for children in these tough times. Apple Health for Kids ensures that all kids get regular check-ups so that childhood illnesses don't become lifelong health problems."

Washington has improved coverage for children through a set of cost-effective policy and practice changes to Apple Health for Kids, including:

- 12-month continuous coverage for enrolled kids;
- no cumbersome asset test for families;
- no need for an in-person interview when they apply;
- one joint application for both Medicaid and CHIP.

These improvements have helped thousands of Washington families to ensure that children get the care they need.

The 2009 CHIP reauthorization law strengthened the partnership between the federal government and Washington's government on children's health coverage. As a result, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has distributed more than \$280 million in "performance bonuses" to support state efforts to cover more uninsured kids.

In the past two years, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has awarded our state \$25 million in federal dollars for Apple Health for Kids' successful and streamlined management.

"There is no better way to mark the anniversary of the CHIP reauthorization law than to recommit to covering uninsured kids. With new national resources and tools and smart, dedicated advocates to work with, Washington state can get the job done," said Joan Alker, co-executive director at the Georgetown Center for Children and Families (CCF).

CCF, an independent, nonpartisan policy and research center based at Georgetown University's Health Policy Institute, provides policy and communications support to the Children's Alliance and other Getting to the Finish Line grantee organizations. Getting to the Finish Line grantees will work closely with state policymakers to identify and advance opportunities to cover additional uninsured children and keep them insured, by eliminating administrative barriers and improving the effectiveness and reach of CHIP and Medicaid.

Since 2007, the Packard Foundation's insuring America's Children: States Leading the Way grantmaking strategy has invested in state-based children's health advocacy organizations. The Children's Alliance has received Packard Foundation grant funding for children's health advocacy since 2008. Advocates in nine other states also received 2011 Finish Line grant awards.

"This year, lawmakers in Olympia are making decisions that will have far-reaching consequences for children. If they can maintain their commitment to covering all kids, we can go a long way toward keeping children healthy and families strong," said Gould.

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The Children's Alliance is a statewide public policy advocacy organization that works at the state and federal level to ensure that all children have what they need to thrive. To learn more about the Children's Alliance, go to www.childrensalliance.org.

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation is a private family foundation created in 1964 by David Packard (1912–1996), cofounder of the Hewlett-Packard Company, and Lucile Salter Packard (1914–1987). The Foundation provides grants to nonprofit organizations in the following program areas: Conservation and Science; Population and Reproductive Health; and Children, Families, and Communities. The Foundation makes national and international grants and also has a special focus on the Northern California Counties of San Benito, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Monterey. Foundation grantmaking includes support for a wide variety of activities including direct services, research and policy development, and public information and education. The Foundation does not make grants intended to influence legislation or support candidates for political office. Foundation grant awards totaled approximately \$234 million in 2010. The Foundation expects grantmaking awards of up to \$232 million in 2011.