



**CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE**

*A Voice for Washington's Children, Youth & Families*

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## **Soldiers From the Front Lines of Washington's Health Care Crisis Celebrate Good News and Acknowledge Work To Be Done**

*Seattle* - On Friday, October 27, advocates for children's health learned of something to celebrate. Newly compiled data from Washington State's Office of Financial Management (OFM) shows a 23% decrease over the last two years in the number of children who were uninsured.

The new data comes in the form of the Washington Population Survey, a bi-annual report issued by the OFM that provides a detailed view of the state's uninsured. The survey was part of a presentation given to the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Care Costs and Access.

For organizations on the front line of advocating for increased coverage, the statistics are heartening. The Children's Alliance and the Community Health Network of Washington are two such organizations that have worked with state leaders to secure funding and facilitate programmatic changes that have created such results – from expanding eligibility to conducting outreach to families.

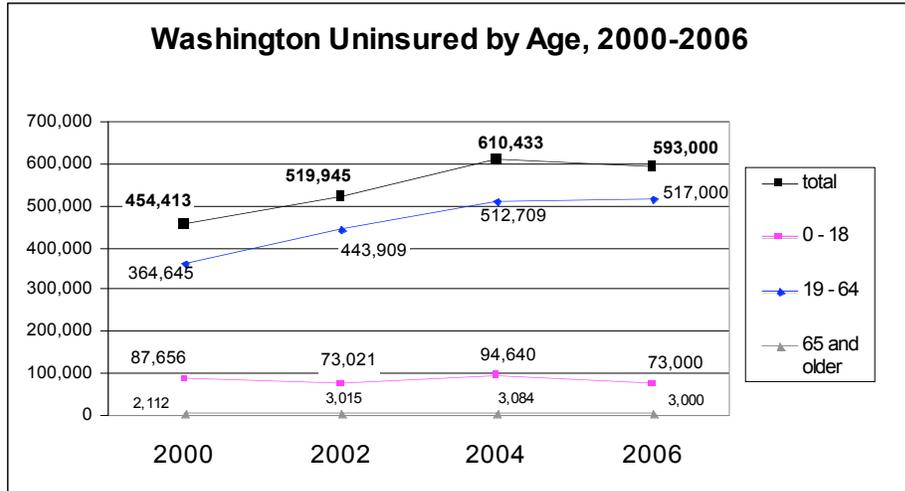
With commitments from the Governor and Legislature to cover all kids by 2010, advocates now have concrete results that show promise for the future. "We now can see that the investments we've made in the past two years are paying off in more children who have the coverage to get the medical care they need," said Liz Arjun of Children's Alliance. "In the coming year, we can finish the job by laying out a plan for covering all children who remain uninsured. We look forward to working with our elected officials to create a Washington in which every child can thrive because they have coverage and access to timely care in a medical home."

Unfortunately, the recently released data does not show a positive trend for adults and this can impact the health of children. A growing body of evidence shows that parental coverage improves children's use of health care, such as preventive care.

The survey shows that the number of uninsured working age adults increased by over 4,000 people in the last two years, for a total 42% increase in the number of uninsured working adults this decade (see chart below).

However, the infrastructure exists to address this problem as well. Nearly two-thirds of currently uninsured adults are potentially eligible for programs such as Washington's Basic Health Plan, but those programs have not been appropriately funded to date.

With positive state revenue forecasts and existing revenue streams (e.g., voter approved tobacco tax Initiative 773), health care advocates see a light at the end of the tunnel for adults as well. “I think we’re in a position to be optimistic about securing health care coverage for more adults,” said Rebecca Kavoussi of Community Health Network of Washington. “The good news here is that many of the funds required to address Washington’s uninsured are already being generated—voter’s ensured this with the passing of I-773. The bad news is that those funds have yet to be applied to expanding the Basic Health Plan. We realize a budget crisis earlier this decade forced many tough decisions, but six years later it’s time to cure our health care problem.”



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**(Note: Additional information, including the full report issued by the Office of Financial management can be made available by contacting the individuals listed at the top of this release.)**

**About Children’s Alliance:**

*For more than twenty years, the Children’s Alliance has advocated for children, youth and families in Washington. The Alliance has 128 organizational members, and more than 7,000 individual members.*

*To learn more about the Children’s Alliance, go to [www.childrensalliance.org](http://www.childrensalliance.org)*

**About Community Health Network of Washington:**

*Community Health Network of Washington is a statewide system of community health centers that exists to ensure all Washingtonians have access to medical care and health insurance. To learn more about the Community Health Network of Washington, go to [www.chnwa.org](http://www.chnwa.org)*