



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor Rell Announces \$1.1 Million in Grants to Boost Children's Enrollment in HUSKY Health Care

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced the awarding of \$1.1 million in grants to schools and community agencies as part of her wide-ranging initiative to make sure that all Connecticut children are covered by health insurance.

"Our goal is to help parents of uninsured children and teenagers learn about the HUSKY program and sign their kids up for the health coverage they need," Governor Rell said. "We now have more than 221,600 children covered by HUSKY, but thousands who are eligible are not enrolled. They are going without health coverage, which means they are probably going without regular health care.

"This needs to change once and for all," the Governor said. "The innovative outreach projects I am announcing today will help get the word out to more parents and result in more uninsured children coming into the HUSKY program."

Community, regional and statewide outreach grants totaling \$600,000 are being awarded through competitive selection by the Department of Social Services, administering agency of the HUSKY Plan.

In addition, 15 statutorily-defined 'priority school districts' are receiving a total of \$370,000 to conduct personnel training and student/parent outreach activities about the HUSKY Plan, in conjunction with the Department of Education. Regional education service centers will be receiving \$130,000 to provide outreach and training services under the grant program.

Governor Rell, who promoted a highly successful HUSKY outreach campaign as lieutenant governor in 2001, noted that community education was effective in spreading the word to parents in the early years of the HUSKY Plan.

"These new grants are based on the same philosophy that worked so well to get the program started," the Governor said. "Parents listen to people and organizations they know and trust in their own communities. These are the best ambassadors of the HUSKY program, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact on enrollment of new children into health coverage."

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Community-based outreach contracts will be awarded to:

- **Wheeler Clinic, Plainville--\$50,000 for New Britain HUSKY outreach initiative**, a grassroots approach to raising awareness and increasing program enrollment. Includes outreach and enrollment events, bilingual information and outreach, ‘Tell-a-Friend’ door hanger campaign, telephone outreach to re-enroll families who have dropped HUSKY coverage and to prevent loss of coverage, local media campaign. Program contact: Judith Stonger, 860-793-9791; jstonger@wheelerclinic.org.
- **Optimus Health Care Inc., Bridgeport--\$50,000 for Stamford HUSKY outreach initiative**, using Stamford Community Health Center and community lay health worker model to conduct person-to-person outreach and education to low-income, immigrant and other eligible uninsured groups. Activities will include outreach to make sure families follow through on annual renewal of HUSKY coverage. Program contact: Patricia Gallegos, 203-696-3260, ext. 3381; pgallegos@opthc.org.
- **City of Bridgeport School-Based Health Centers--\$50,000 for Bridgeport HUSKY outreach initiative** aimed at reaching parents through application seminars, information materials through community organizations and a public awareness radio campaign. The staff consists of bilingual/bicultural members to enable communication with diverse populations. Program contact: Kate Gredinger, school-based health centers director, 203-576-8442.
- **Community Renewal Team, Hartford--\$50,000 for Hartford HUSKY outreach initiative** to promote public awareness and increase enrollment of eligible children through such measures as delivery of information through schools, case managers, WIC, Foodshare distribution sites, community presentations and follow-up to ensure that the family takes the action steps to enroll. Presentations will be made in a variety of languages, in partnership with community organizations serving diverse populations. Program contact: James Pestana, 860-560-5769; JimP@crtct.org
- **New Life Corporation, New Haven--\$50,000 for New Haven HUSKY outreach initiative** to link consumer information and assistance with health coverage enrollment and renewal to the organization’s Low Income Tax Clinic workshops, Earned Income Tax Credit campaign, faith-based outreach, outreach with area hospitals and community health clinics, employers with low-wage workers, local media, and other measures. Program contact: Ariel Martinez, 203-777-0313; amartinez@newlifecorp.org.

Regional outreach contracts will be awarded to:

- **Allied Community Resources Inc., East Windsor--\$75,000 for outreach activities in the Northern Region** to provide program information and support with applications and enrollment/re-enrollment through outreach sessions held in a variety



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of settings, including neighborhood centers, churches, job centers, clinics, town social service offices and other locations around the region. Outreach sessions will be publicized through several media, including Spanish-language radio, television and newspapers throughout the region. Program contact: Carol A. Bohnet, 860-749-8833; cbohnet@alliedgroup.org

- **CT Association for Community Action, Inc. (CAFCA), Hartford - \$75,000 for outreach activities in the Southern Region and \$75,000 for outreach activities in the Western Region.** CAFCA, the umbrella organization of Connecticut's Community Action Agencies (CAAs) will subcontract with its member agencies, Community Action Agency of New Haven; Community Renewal Team (Hartford); New Opportunities (Waterbury), TEAM (Derby); Thames Valley Council for Community Action (New London); Community Action Committee of Danbury, CTE (Stamford), Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now; and Action for Bridgeport Community Development) to have a designated outreach coordinator responsible for the organization of local outreach efforts within the cities and towns serviced by the CAAs. Outreach coordinators will utilize the state's 'Human Services Infrastructure' process to monitor and track clients, provide backup and support to the outreach workers with client follow-up and HUSKY application assistance. Program contact: David MacDonald, 860-560-5487; david@cafca.org

A statewide outreach contract will be awarded to:

- **Allied Community Resources Inc., East Windsor--\$125,000 for statewide outreach activities** to conduct outreach sessions that will provide program information to employers and individuals, and provide support with applications and enrollment/re-enrollment. The marketing of the outreach sessions will be through various media, including websites, local newspapers, chamber newsletters and emails, school bulletins, community posters, Infoline – 211, cable television and local radio stations. Outreach sessions will be held in a variety of settings, including businesses, neighborhood centers, churches, job centers, clinics and town social service offices. Contact: Carol A. Bohnet, 860-749-8833; cbohnet@alliedgroup.org.

Fifteen Priority School Districts will be awarded contracts totaling \$370,000 to designate an outreach coordinator for the purpose of collecting information on insured versus uninsured within their school district, and to reach out to those identified as uninsured to

provide HUSKY information, client follow-up and application assistance. Each priority school district may request that their funds be directed to its area Regional Educational Services Center for the performance of these tasks. The priority school districts and funding allocations are:

- \$40,000 to Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport;
- \$30,000 to Waterbury; and
- \$20,000 to Ansonia, Bristol, Danbury, East Hartford, Meriden, New Britain, New London, Norwalk, Norwich, Stamford and Windham/Willimantic

The state Department of Education's six Regional Educational Service Centers (RESCs) are: Area Cooperative Education Services (ACES) in North Haven; Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) in Hartford; Cooperative Educational Services (CES) in Trumbull; EASTCONN in Hampton; Education Connection in Litchfield; and LEARN in Old Lyme. Through a single contract with ACES, the Department of Social Services will provide \$130,000 to be used by each RESC to develop and implement a training plan to provide education and training on the HUSKY program to school social workers, nurses, counselors and teachers. Contact: Joshua Smith, ACES, 203-407-4454; jsmith@aces.k12.ct.us.

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The HUSKY outreach funding program was announced by Governor Rell last September as the first in a series of health-related initiatives, including:

- \$25.8 million in renovating and expanding the state's network of **community health centers** (more information at www.ct.gov/governorrell/cwp/view.asp?A=2425&Q=320534);
- \$2 million for **disease management** programs for high-risk patients (www.ct.gov/governorrell/cwp/view.asp?A=2425&Q=331586);
- **The Charter Oak Health Plan** to offer an affordable health insurance package to uninsured adults of all incomes. (www.ct.gov/governorrell/cwp/view.asp?A=2425&Q=329924); and
- **HUSKY Health 2007** initiative to ensure that newborns and school-age children have access to insurance coverage through the HUSKY Plan (www.ct.gov/governorrell/cwp/view.asp?A=2425&Q=329924).

According to the state Office of Health Care Access (OHCA), over 91% of all residents and over 95% of children under 19 currently have health coverage, putting Connecticut in the top 12 states for this health care benchmark. However, an estimated 222,600 to state residents were believed to be uninsured in 2006, according to OCHA.

On Monday, Governor Rell announced that nearly 8,800 new children and teenagers have been enrolled in Connecticut's HUSKY health care program since July, accompanied by nearly



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new 4,400 parents and relative caregivers. The expanding children's enrollment numbers in that time span, coupled with more parents signing up, suggest that the state's renewed efforts to raise awareness among to families about the HUSKY Plan are bearing fruit.

Enrollment of children in HUSKY Part A - which provides totally free coverage for children in families with incomes up to 185% of the federal poverty level (for example, up to \$37,000 for a family of four) - has increased by about 6,450 since July and now stands at approximately 205,700. In addition, HUSKY A is covering over 89,300 eligible parents, relative caregivers and pregnant women, up from 84,930 in July.

Enrollment in HUSKY Part B - which provides coverage on a sliding fee scale for children in families with incomes over 185% of the federal poverty level - has increased by 2,330 since July and is currently at its highest level ever at approximately 17,200. Another 2,208 children have been determined eligible for HUSKY B and will be enrolled after parents select a HUSKY managed care plan.

Information about HUSKY services and enrollment is available at 1-877-CT-HUSKY and www.huskyhealth.com.

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