



# PEDIATRICS INTEREST GROUP UPDATE

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Issue 10

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### **YOUNG PARENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS NOT RECEIVING ASSISTANCE**

Many parenting homeless youth fail to receive TANF cash assistance or services designed to help them achieve self-sufficiency according to a study conducted by the Center on Law and Social Policy and the National Network for Youth. Many are simply unaware of the program and their likely eligibility for assistance. The authors conclude that there is a tremendous need for TANF administrators, caseworkers and providers serving homeless youth to help young people access the resources and support they need and are eligible to receive. The report includes both policy and practice recommendations to improve the delivery of service to homeless youth. A copy of the report can be viewed at

[http://www.clasp.org/Pubs/DMS/Documents/1037307545.54/edge\\_report.pdf](http://www.clasp.org/Pubs/DMS/Documents/1037307545.54/edge_report.pdf)

**SOURCE: Alliance Online News, National Alliance to End Homelessness Online Newsletter, November 22, 2002**

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### **PEDIATRIC COMBINATION VACCINES ON THE HORIZON: CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS AND ISSUES**

Medical Education Resources is sponsoring a program intended for physicians, PAs, nurse practitioners and nurses who are involved in the care of pediatric patients.

Pediatric Combination Vaccines on the Horizon: Clinical Implications and Issues, is a continuing medical education slide lecture kit available on CD-ROM. Learning objectives are to:

- describe the need for combination vaccines to simplify the crowded childhood immunization schedule;
- identify combination vaccines that are in development; and
- discuss various considerations for implementation of a combination vaccine into practice.

CME and CEU are approved. This continuing medical education activity is made possible by an unrestricted educational grant from GlaxoSmithKline.

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### **ADOLESCENT RISK AND VULNERABILITY**

The Journal of Adolescent Health recently published a special edition entitled, **Adolescent Risk and Vulnerability: Concepts and Measurement**. The report explores the perceptions of risk and vulnerability; presents a conceptual model for adolescent risk and perception, which is then tested empirically; explores the social costs of adolescent risk-taking and vulnerability; and discusses priority-setting research and practice. The objective of the publication is to suggest a new way of looking at these issues and concerns, and the hope is that it stimulates new ideas for research and services that improve the lives of vulnerable young people. For a copy of this report, call the National Academy Press at 800 624-6242 or visit the website at <http://www.nap.edu>.

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### **ROOTS FOR CHANGE: THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EQUITY ALLIANCE WEBSITE**

Pediatric Interest Group member Susan Kline writes, "Here is a website and organization that might serve as a resource for clinicians or parents." Take a look and see what you think; visit Roots for Change, the website for the **Early Childhood Equity Alliance** at <http://www.rootsforchange.net> <<http://www.rootsforchange.net/>> . The mission of the ECEA is to nurture and connect people engaged in racial and social justice education and action with and for young children, families and communities.

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### **STRATEGIES TO HELP STATES STRENGTHEN CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

A new report prepared by the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) with support from The Commonwealth Fund outlines concrete steps that states can take to help strengthen child development services, highlighting innovative practices in Arizona, California, Kentucky, Maine, North Carolina, and Washington. The report, **Reasons and Strategies for Strengthening Childhood Development Services in the Healthcare System**, encourages states to work more closely with primary pediatric providers to help identify at-risk children, counsel parents, and refer children with serious behavioral and developmental problems for additional social services in the community. Authors Karen VanLandeghem, Deborah Curtis of NASHP, and Melinda Abrams of The Commonwealth Fund also present recent research that documents the effectiveness of child development services.

The paper is based on data, national policy reports, and state models that were featured at a national meeting of state health agency administrators, child health providers, and others interested in improving early childhood development services,

policies, and practices. Click here to read, download, or order the report: <http://www.cmwf.org/publist/publist2.asp?CategoryID=2> For more information on this project, contact Helen Pelletier, Director of Communications, National Academy for State Health Policy, at 207 874-6524.

**SOURCE:** [CommonwealthFund@cmwf.org](mailto:CommonwealthFund@cmwf.org)

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### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHILDREN'S DENTAL NEEDS AND DENTAL CARE UTILIZATION**

A study in the November 2002 **American Journal of Public Health** describes the relationship between dental needs and dental care utilization among children. The study found that younger children with perceived needs (i.e., needs perceived by the child or responsible adult) were more likely to be episodic users of dental care than children without perceived needs. Younger children with normative needs (i.e., defined by the presence of untreated caries diagnosed by a dentist) were less likely to be regular users. Older children with perceived or normative needs were more likely to be episodic users and less likely to have had a previous-year visit than children with no needs. The study concludes that despite their presence, dental needs do not drive dental care use among children, and children's dental care utilization is inadequate.

**SOURCE:** **American Journal of Public Health, 2002; 92:1816 - 1821**

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### **PEDIATRIC PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CARIES**

A study published in the May 2002 issue of **Pediatrics** suggests that dental screenings can easily be incorporated into a busy pediatrics practice and that pediatric primary care providers can significantly contribute to the overall oral health of young children by the identification of those children who need to be seen by a dentist. For an electronic copy of the article, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics website at <http://www.pediatrics.org> and search for Pierce, K.M., Rozier, R.G., and Vann Jr., W.F. "**Accuracy of pediatric primary care providers' screening and referral for early childhood caries.**" *Pediatrics*, vol. 109, no. 5, May 2002, page. e82.

**SOURCE:** **Streamline: The Migrant Health News Source, September/October 2002**

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### **NEW GRANTS FOR ASTHMA RESEARCH AWARDED**

Both the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases have awarded new grants for asthma research to various programs throughout the country.

The NHLBI program is aimed at understanding why certain racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups are more severely affected by asthma than other populations. The research will also address ways to close the gaps in prevalence and treatment of this disease. The research will be done through five new **Centers for Reducing Asthma Disparities**, comprising of both an academic center for research and a medical facility to treat the minority or economically disadvantaged populations.

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease grant has been awarded to

the University of Wisconsin at Madison to establish a nationwide research network with the goal of reducing the severity of asthma and preventing the disease in inner-city children. The Inner-City Asthma Consortium will study both possible causes and promising treatments for the rising incidents of inner-city children with asthma. To read more about these studies, go to <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/index.htm>

**Source: National Institute of Health Press Release [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov), October 30, 2002**

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#### **BILINGUAL BOOKLET ON ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE AVAILABLE**

The National Council of La Raza and the United States Department of Health and Human Services have worked together to produce a bilingual booklet that explains how parents can receive low-cost or free health insurance. The booklet also serves as a guide for families with concerns about immigration status. **Protect Your Family's Health with Confidence** examines Medicaid, the State Children's Health Insurance Program and answers questions regarding children's health coverage when a parent is not a U.S. citizen. A copy of the booklet, *Protect Your Family's Health with Confidence*, is available in PDF format at

<http://www.insurekidsnow.gov/confidence/Confianza.pdf>

**SOURCE: Child Health Information Project, Children's Defense Fund, November 1, 2002**

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#### **CAMPAIGN FOR TOBACCO-FREE KIDS LAUNCHES ONLINE CAMPAIGN**

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids has launched an online campaign in an effort to raise the level of attention paid to tobacco issues. The campaign urges Governors, U.S. Senators and other officials to make tobacco prevention a priority. The online campaign asks nonprofit and health groups to forward this message to their politicians and other activists. This is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) activity, which does not support, oppose or endorse any candidate for elected office. To learn more about the campaign, go to <http://www.kidsbeforeprofits.org>. The Spanish version can be found at <http://www.kidsbeforeprofits.org/span>

**Source: Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids [www.tobaccofreekids.org](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org), October 29, 2002**

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#### **JOIN THE CAMPAIGN TO LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND**

The Children's Defense Fund has teamed up with scores of partner groups to mobilize children's advocates all over the country to generate support in Congress for the Act to Leave No Child Behind (S. 940 and H.R. 1990). Introduced on May 23, 2001, by lead sponsors Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT) and Congressman George Miller (D-CA), passage of the Act to Leave No Child Behind will provide each child in America a **Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Safe Start, a Fair Start, and a Moral Start** in life. Among the health-related provisions are:

- creating MediKids, a Medicare-type guarantee of coverage for all children as Medicare provides coverage for all senior citizens;
- expanding the Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP) eligibility levels to 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level and eligibility age level through 21 years of age;

- improving health services for children enrolled in Medicaid to ensure that all enrolled children receive services through the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program (EPSDT);
- simplifying outreach and enrollment for Medicaid and CHIP;
- allotting more federal funds to help prevent, treat, and manage childhood asthma and lead poisoning; and
- reducing environmental health risks to children.

To learn more about the Act to Leave No Child Behind, go to the CDF Action Council's website at <http://www.Cdfactioncouncil.org/act.htm>

When you join the campaign, you will receive periodic updates on the progress of the Campaign to Leave No Child Behind, invitations to participate in campaign activities in your area, legislative briefings on the Act to Leave No Child Behind, and e-mail Action Alerts to let you know how you can have an impact on the outcome of important votes in Congress. For more information on the Campaign to Leave No Child Behind, go to <http://campaign.childrensdefense.org>.

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#### **SUBSCRIBE TO THE CHILD HEALTH INFORMATION PROJECT LISTSERV**

To subscribe to the Child Health Information Project Listserv, visit the Children's Defense Fund's website at [http://www.childrensdefense.org/listservs\\_chip.htm](http://www.childrensdefense.org/listservs_chip.htm) and follow the directions at the bottom of the page or send the following message to [Majordomo@newsletter.listbox.com](mailto:Majordomo@newsletter.listbox.com): Subscribe cdfhealth

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#### **NASHP RELEASES REPORT ON STRENGTHENING CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) released, "**Reasons and Strategies for Strengthening Childhood Development Services in the Healthcare System**," a report that outlines steps that states can take to help strengthen child development services. The report presents recent research documenting the effectiveness of child development services and highlights practices in six states. The report includes recommendations for improving early childhood development services at the primary care, community and state level. Some of the suggested strategies for state are to:

- Create comprehensive and coordinated systems of care that integrate relevant federal and state programs for young children and families;
- Build effective partnerships between state health, education, human service, mental health and substance abuse agencies, professional associations, parent groups and others; and
- Use multiple programs such as child care and WIC, as key entry points for linkages and referrals to child development services.

The report is available at <http://www.cmf.org/publist/publist2.asp?CategoryID=2>.

**SOURCE: Primary Care Network News, The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, Volume 6; Number 22, November 1, 2002**

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#### **NEW SITE TO HELP INCREASE ENROLLMENT IN CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE**

The Children's Partnership released a new **National Express Lane Eligibility** (ELE) website that describes processes to easily identify and enroll eligible uninsured low-income children into subsidized health insurance programs. It works to increase a child's enrollment in health insurance by connecting Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) with other public programs with similar eligibility guidelines, such as the School Lunch, Food Stamps and WIC programs. This resource incorporates examples of new research and Express Lane efforts in communities across the nation. It is designed to provide advocates, community leaders, and policy makers with the tools they need to provide health insurance to more than four million uninsured children who are enrolled in other needs-based public programs. For more information, visit <http://www.expresslane.info>.

**SOURCE: Primary Care Network News, The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, Volume 6; Number 22, November 1, 2002**

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This Pediatrics Interest Group e-mail update is brought to you by the Health Care for the Homeless Clinicians' Network. We invite you to share your opinion on issues of concern to the pediatrics community. Plus, we welcome your feedback. If you have comments or suggestions for improvements to the newsletter, please send them to the Pediatrics Interest Group newsletter editor, Brenda Proffitt, at [bproffitt@nhchc.org](mailto:bproffitt@nhchc.org).

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Virtually yours,  
Brenda Proffitt