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Phoenix Contact: Matt Jewett  
[mjewett@azchildren.org](mailto:mjewett@azchildren.org)  
(602) 266-0707 x211

Tucson contact: Penelope Jacks  
[pjacks@caa.tuccoxmail.com](mailto:pjacks@caa.tuccoxmail.com)  
(520) 795-4199 work

**KidsCare Enrollment Down More Than a Quarter Since January  
as 40,000 Children Are Frozen Out of Affordable Health Insurance**  
*Enrollment Will Eventually Dwindle to Near Zero*

(Phoenix, AZ) – AHCCCS this week released the latest monthly data of children who are frozen out of affordable health insurance through KidsCare, even though they meet the eligibility requirements. Since January 1, 2010, 40,484 children have applied for KidsCare, but their applications have not been processed due to a lack of funding being appropriated by the legislature. Enrollment in KidsCare has fallen from approximately 47,000 in the months before the freeze to 33,708 as of May 1, a drop of 28%. The Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) of the Arizona Legislature estimates that enrollment will drop even further, by more than 2/3rds between now and June 30, 2011.

KidsCare has been an Arizona success story since it was enacted in 1998. The rate of children with health insurance in our state has increased from 74% to 84% since that time. The federal government picks up more than three-quarters of the cost of KidsCare, and families also pay affordable monthly premiums. KidsCare provides health insurance to children in working families who earn too much to qualify for AHCCCS-Medicaid, but cannot find or afford health insurance on their own. Children must be U.S. citizens or have resided in the United States legally for at least five years.

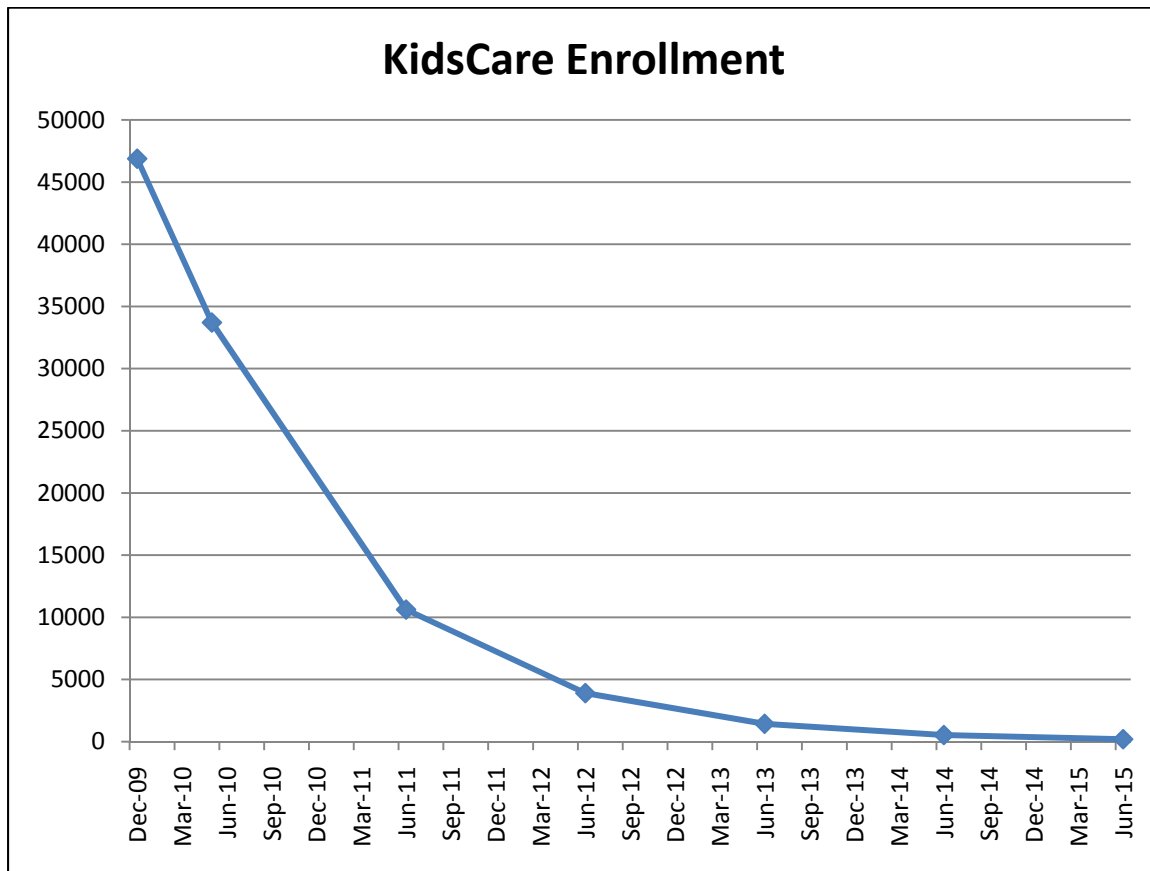
“I work hard to support my daughter, but because of her diabetes, I cannot find health insurance I can afford” said Patti Huey of Apache Junction, who is losing AHCCCS coverage because she recently was hired for a job, and whose daughter would likely be eligible for KidsCare if not for the enrollment freeze. “With KidsCare, I could easily afford the insulin my daughter needs to stay healthy and go to school, and I could go to work without worrying about her.”

A national poll by the non-profit organization First Focus in October 2009 found 87% of voters support assuring that all children in the United States have health care coverage, and by a 4-to-1 margin, voters said they would be less likely to support candidates who voted to reduce Children’s Health Insurance Programs such as KidsCare as part of health reform.

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“As we enter election season, Arizona voters will be asking candidates for the legislature and Governor whether they support bringing KidsCare all the way back,” said Dana Wolfe Naimark, President/CEO of Children’s Action Alliance. “Ending the KidsCare enrollment freeze is the right decision because it helps children grow up strong and thrive, but it is also the smart choice in this tough economy as it protects families from crippling medical debt,” added Naimark.

“The legislature has numerous options to identify the additional \$11 million to fully fund KidsCare for next fiscal year,” Naimark pointed out. “One is to hire back the auditors and collectors who have been laid off at the State Department of Revenue so that they can collect taxes that are already owed.”



*KidsCare enrollment through May 2010 is provided by AHCCCS. Future enrollment projections are from the Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) of the Arizona Legislature.*

*Children’s Action Alliance is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to promoting the well-being of all of Arizona’s children and their families through research, policy development, media campaigns and advocacy. For more information, please visit the CAA website at [www.azchildren.org](http://www.azchildren.org).*

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