

Federation of Pediatric Organizations (FOPO)

Position Statement

Health Insurance for All Children and Youth in the United States

All children and youth in this country deserve health insurance coverage. This nation provides health insurance coverage for every American 65 years and older through the Medicare program. Moreover, our nation has provided universal services for a variety of sectors such as education, social security, and public safety. We assert that the health of children is essential to our nation's future, and should be viewed in the same way. The Federation of Pediatric Organizations (FOPO), which represents the voice of seven of the leading national organizations within the pediatric community, believes our nation's children and youth deserve the same guarantee of health insurance coverage.

Health insurance for our nation's children and youth also must be adequate to meet the health care needs of all children. These needs include preventive and developmental services; acute, emergency, specialty, and inpatient care; comprehensive services for children with special health care needs; dental care; and mental health care.

Studies by FOPO members have demonstrated that inadequate health insurance in any of these essential areas of child health care results in poor health outcomes and preventable morbidity that can extend into adulthood. Studies have also shown that adequate health insurance improves the health and quality of life of children, helping to prepare them for productive lives.

Health insurance for children is far less expensive than is health insurance for adults. It is economically feasible and sound public policy to provide health insurance to all children.

The Federation of Pediatric Organizations calls upon the members of the United States Congress to enact legislation that will ensure that **all** children and adolescents living in the United States are provided broad and adequate health insurance coverage, thereby improving our children's and nation's health outcomes.