

Los Angeles County Faith Based Child Care Providers Network News

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Welcome to the Network News!

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Upcoming Events

- ◆ July 20th - SPA 4 cluster meeting
- ◆ July 29th - Playground renovation workshop

It is with great joy that I invite you to join a faith-based childcare network in Los Angeles County. For several years, the California Council of Churches has been working to create a statewide faith-based childcare network. As one step in that process, the Council has received a major grant from First 5 LA to increase the quantity and quality of licensed child care in Los Angeles County, especially in low-income areas.

For the next three years, we will be working to create clusters of faith-based childcare centers in each Service Planning Area (SPA) in the County, which will come together for support, resource sharing, mentoring and strategic planning. We will offer countywide networking meetings and opportunities to learn about First 5 and the resources available to early childhood development centers and the families we serve. We will share information on training opportunities, funding streams, regulation changes, and accreditation processes through a quarterly newsletter, emails, and our statewide website www.calchurches.org

We want to hear from you and your unique needs as a faith-based child care center director -- your challenges, your joys, your hopes and your visions -- and share those with

others as we build this network together.

Our staff includes consultant Patricia Navarette-Davids, Administrative Assistant Michelle Cassidy, along with Administrative and Website Coordinator Laura Herr. Dr. John Orr is our project evaluator.

So that our database is up to date and accurate, please complete the information form you were sent in the mail and fax it back to us. If you need another one, let us know by emailing Michelle Cassidy at michellechurches@earthlink.net

In the meantime, if you have questions or ideas to share, I can be reached at (323) 256-3162 or kathy@calchurches.org

Blessings to you and the children you serve,

Rev. Kathy Cooper-Ledesma
Associate Director
California Council of Churches

Funded through a grant from First 5 LA

Health Insurance for Every Child in LA County



Call
1-888-
4LA-KIDS

*“350,000 children
are uninsured in
Los Angeles County
alone.”*

The Children’s Health Initiative of Greater Los Angeles has collected more than \$80 million in donations and pledges to expand the Healthy Kids program to include children through age 18. The \$112 million fund goal will cover the cost of health insurance premiums for children who qualify, as well as ongoing efforts to increase enrollment into other existing publicly funded health insurance programs.

The Children’s Health Initiative of Greater Los Angeles is backed by a coalition of healthcare providers, private employers, business leaders, advocacy groups, foundations, public health officials, labor unions and educators. The coalition co-conveners are L.A. Care Health Plan, The California Endowment, and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. Key financial supporters include Blue Shield of California Foundation, California Community Foundation, First 5LA, Kaiser Permanente Health Plan, L.A. Care Health Plan, The California Endowment, and UniHealth Foundation

There are more than one million uninsured children and youth 18 and younger in California, and more than 350,000 in Los Angeles County alone, according to the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. Seventy-four percent are eligible for, but not enrolled in, Medi-Cal or Healthy Families and 90 percent reside in households with annual incomes less than 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level – which equates to approximately \$56,000 for a family of four. Nine percent are immigrant children of legally documented immigrant parents, and 21 percent are children of undocumented immigrants.

Children and youth 18 and younger who live in Los Angeles County could be eligible for a program, even if their parents are working and have a steady income.

Available programs are:

- **Medi-Cal** – free or low-cost program for children in families with low incomes
- **Healthy Families** – low-cost insurance for children in families whose income is too high to qualify for Medi-Cal but does not exceed 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (approximately \$47,000 annually for a family of four)
- **Healthy Kids** – until recently, this program only covered children through age 5 with funding from First 5 LA. With funding from the Children’s Health Initiative, the program is now expanded to cover youth through age 18 in families at or below 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (approximately \$56,000 annually for a family of four) who are ineligible for Medi-Cal and Healthy Families.

For questions about eligibility or enrollment, parents are encouraged to call 1-888-4LA-KIDS (1-888-452-5437) There is no risk to find out if you qualify. Your information will be kept confidential and your immigration status doesn’t matter.

For more information about the Children’s Health Initiative of Greater Los Angeles, please visit www.chigla.org.

Renovating Playgrounds: Models, Resources, and Collaborations

Thursday, July 29th at 1:30 pm come and discover how the LA Conservation Corps is working to remodel childcare center playgrounds across the county. Learn about resources available for your playground renovation, and models you can use and visit.

We will also be discussing the potential of a collaborative proposal with LACC, joining faith based centers together to seek funding for playground renovations. Plan now to attend! Confirm your spot by calling (323) 256-3162 or emailing kathy@calchurches.org



First 5 LA Visits Hollywood area cluster July 20th

Hollywood area childcare center directors and clergy are invited to discover the programs of **First 5 L.A.** and how they can help you offer more resources to the families they serve. Come for lunch on July 20th and learn more about:

Low/No cost health insurance for all children

Small grants to enhance your child care program

The future of child care - Universal Preschool

Join your colleagues in our growing network of faith-based child care providers at a gathering hosted by

the California Council of Churches
LA County Faith Based Providers Network.

Tuesday, July 20th
12:30-2:00 pm
Hollywood Presbyterian
Children's Center
1760 N. Gower Street
Los Angeles, CA 90028

Reservations are mandatory.
RSVP by July 15th to
kathy@calchurches.org or
by calling (323) 256-3162.

*Newer playgrounds
enhance the quality
of your program*

**Say that I'm a Child of God:
Assuring Justice and Care to Leave No Child Behind
2004 Children's Sabbath Materials Available Now
visit the CDF website at www.childrensdefense.org
or call (202) 662-3652**

California Council
of Churches
PO Box 412168
Los Angeles, CA 90041

Phone and fax:
(323) 256-3162

Sacramento office:
2715 K Street, Suite D
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 442-5447

Rev. Kathy Cooper-
Ledesma
kathy@calchurches.org

Pat Navarette-Davids
pndavids@earthlink.net

Michelle Cassidy
michellechurches@earthlink.net

We're on the Web!
www.calchurches.org

Mission Statement

The **California Council of Churches** serves as a prophetic witness to the Gospel by educating faith communities to pursue justice, equity, and fairness in the treatment of all people, in particular those most vulnerable in society. The Council represents 20 Protestant and Orthodox denominations and over 1.5 million church members throughout California. The Council lifts up issues of concern to California's faith community such as hunger, homelessness, health care, child care, violence, civil rights, economic and environmental justice, and religious liberty.

Preschool for All News

Studies prove that children who go to quality preschools are more likely to graduate from high school, less likely to become involved in crime, and less likely to have unwanted pregnancies in their teens, resulting in savings that far exceed the cost of these programs. *(Reynolds, et al, 2001; Karoly)*

At press time, AB56 (Stenberg), which would create a state master plan for early childhood education, was referred to the Master Plan Conference Committee. Check our website at www.calchurches.org for updates.

California Council of Churches
PO Box 412168
Los Angeles, CA 90041



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