

May & June 2010

covering kids & families (CKF)

is a statewide coalition dedicated to reducing health disparities and improving overall health in Wisconsin by cultivating a network of informed individuals and organizations, thereby enhancing capacity to maximize participation in public health insurance programs.

CKF is housed at the UW-Madison School of Human Ecology, working in partnership with UW-Extension and other partners throughout the state.

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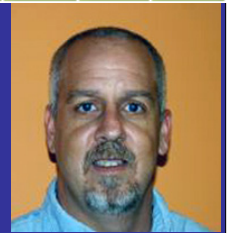
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School-based Outreach: What's Next?

by Michael Jacob



Covering kids & families' school-based outreach, the "CHILD Project," has been every bit as fruitful as we hoped it would be. As with all pilot projects, it started with a good idea and a lot of unknowns. The basic premise was to try a lot of things in a lot of venues, pay careful attention to our constituencies (schools and parents), learn from our mistakes and carefully document it all.

So the question is: What's next?

The answer: Lots of different things!

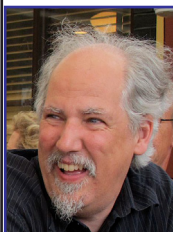
We have gathered our many lessons learned and resources we developed in partnership with the pilot districts and packaged it all into an on-line Toolbox. To promote the Toolbox, we have recorded webcasts at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators. We have also put together a printed promotional image of the Toolbox and mailed that to school nurses and social workers in every public school district in Wisconsin. We'll be showcasing the Toolbox at as many events as possible over the summer and into the fall, working with CESAs and others in direct contact with educators and administrators. Generally speaking, we want as many school districts as possible to begin using the tools and reaching out to covering kids & families' staff if they need assistance.

Covering kids & families has secured some initial funding that will allow us to continue to work intensively in a number of CESAs this fall, and we're hopeful about prospects to work intensively in most of the state for several more years.

Meanwhile, we hope that the Toolbox is situated such that school staff in any district can work their way through the tools and that they will feel encouraged to contact covering kids & families' staff at any point they need technical support. We will also remain available to school staff working with uninsured families in their districts to answer general questions about BadgerCare+ enrollment as well as troubleshoot case-specific challenges.



Meet the New Staff at covering kids & families



George Hagenauer joined [covering kids & families](#) in March on a short-term project through June 2010. He explored whether our [BadgerCare+ school-based outreach](#) could be adapted to early childhood programs. He also finalized our *Crossing the Finish Line* project and worked closely with the Wisconsin Council on Children & Families to develop and present materials on the history of BadgerCare and the next steps for improving health coverage for families and children in Wisconsin. For the past 19 years, George worked at Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C) in Madison, Wisconsin, as its early Childhood Data and Public Policy staff person. Prior to that, he worked for 20 years in Chicago's inner city developing alternative schools and adult literacy programs. Good Luck George.



Nancy Kuehn joined [covering kids & families](#) in March to implement ongoing projects designed to connect Wisconsin public schools with outreach and enrollment assistance for BadgerCare+. She brings to CKF experience in career counseling at a community college, designing, implementing and evaluating educational programs with UW-Extension, teaching health at the middle-school level in Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District, and coordinating programs for the Wisconsin-Works (W-2) welfare reform initiative for the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development. Nancy earned her degree at Purdue University in Health Promotion and Health Education. Nancy's e-mail is nkuehn@wisc.edu.



Jean Nothnagel joined [covering kids & families](#) in March to continue the activities as Lead for several school districts in the Connecting Health Insurance to Lunch Data (CHILD) project and as a contributor to project planning and program evaluation. She has prior experience in the state health-care financing arena as a clinical consultant in Health Care Program Integrity for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. At the Department of Health Services, Jean later joined the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program for outreach, technical assistance and program evaluation. Successful partnerships with DPI, CESAs and county resources were vital in Birth to 3, just as they are for CKF's school-based outreach model. Jean has a Bachelor's degree in Physical Therapy and a Master's degree in Health Care Administration. You can e-mail Jean at nothnagel@wisc.edu.



Mary Unmuth joined the [covering kids & families](#) crew in February 2010. She feels fortunate and privileged to be part of this project that is dedicated to reducing Wisconsin's health disparities and enhancing participation in Wisconsin's public health insurance programs. During the last fifteen years, Mary did outreach work for the UW-Madison Wisconsin Women's Education Network on *Addiction, Recovery and Prevention*. She also worked as a Senior Outreach Specialist for The Department of Health Services--*Project Fresh Light*--a grant-funded endeavor that addressed our State's adolescent treatment services. Mary has a B.S. in Psychology. You can e-mail Mary at mjunmuth@wisc.edu.



Toolbox: www.ckfwi.org/toolbox.html

Toolbox: www.ckfwi.org/toolbox.html



The BADGERCARE+ Toolbox Is Now Online!



by Nancy Kuehn & Ludys Ebratt

For three years now, *covering kids & families* has worked closely with 16 diverse school districts across Wisconsin to connect uninsured children to BadgerCare+.

We have learned that schools need:

- Localized outreach tools
- Strategies tailored to district capacity
- Increased capacity among school staff
- Simple, accessible training tools on BadgerCare+
- Strengthened community partnerships
- Systems to collect and share Health Insurance Status information

One result of this pilot project is an on-line Toolbox of resources that helps school districts identify and assist uninsured children. The on-line information and trainings expand the range of options available for school personnel to help get uninsured children covered by BadgerCare+, Wisconsin’s affordable and comprehensive public health insurance program.

The materials in the Toolbox can be downloaded for free and customized to your district. These tools can help school district staff improve their knowledge of BadgerCare+, develop simple strategies to identify uninsured children, design outreach plans, and connect with local organizations that can help families sign up for BadgerCare+. The Toolbox is great for back-to-school and year-round use.

A big thank-you to the staff and administrators of our pilot districts who helped us develop this resource!

What Can the Toolbox Help You Do In Your Efforts To Help the Uninsured?

1. **Learn basics of BadgerCare+:** Who’s eligible, services covered, how families can apply
2. **Promote BadgerCare+:** Bookmarks, newsletter articles, school lunch/calendar “ads”
3. **Identify uninsured kids in your district:** Templates and strategies to assess Health Insurance Status
4. **Enroll families in BadgerCare+:** Strengthen partnerships and offer Express Enrollment



Explore the toolbox at: www.ckfwi.org/toolbox.html

“Three times as many CHILD district parents reported that they were “very likely” to seek help with BadgerCare+ from school staff.”

--Danielle Berman

BADGERCARE+ Outreach in Connecting Health Insurance to Lunch Data (CHILD) Schools: Survey finds parents need more specific information about Wisconsin’s public health insurance program

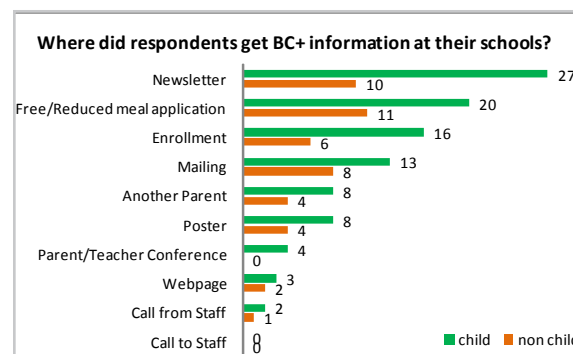
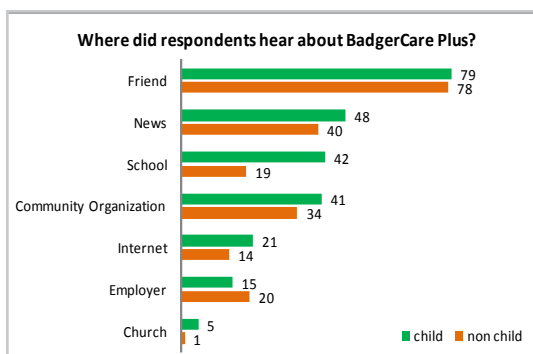
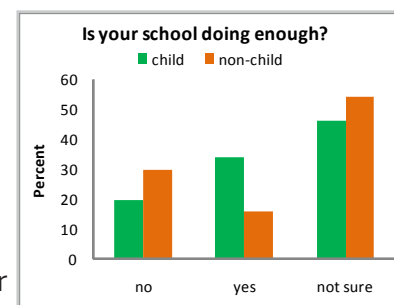
by Danielle Berman



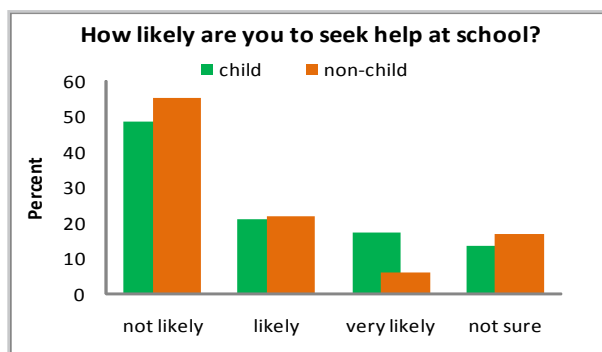
To evaluate the effectiveness of the CHILD project, [covering kids & families](#) recently mailed a short survey to 1900 parents of students in CHILD school districts and other comparable school districts across Wisconsin. Close to 20% (363) of those surveyed have responded thus far.

There are significant differences in respondents’ views about the role their schools are playing to address health insurance issues.

- Parents in CHILD districts were more than twice as likely to report that their schools were doing enough to let families know about BadgerCare+.
- Parents in CHILD districts were more likely to report hearing about BadgerCare+ in their schools, and many noted that they saw information in school newsletters, as well as other venues such as enrollment events and applications for free/reduced school meals.



- Three times as many CHILD district parents reported that they were “very likely” to seek help with BadgerCare+ from school staff.



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“... more work remains to be done across the state when it comes to more specific information parents may need about Wisconsin’s public health insurance program.”

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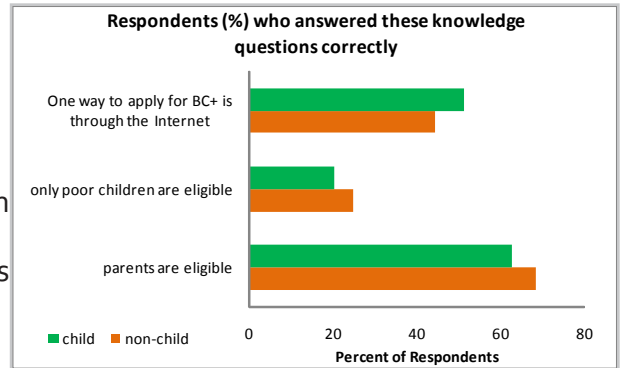
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BADGERCARE+ Outreach in CHILD Schools (continued)

by Danielle Berman

The survey found little difference between parents in CHILD and non-CHILD districts in terms of their awareness of and knowledge about BadgerCare+. In particular, parents across the state remain uninformed about the ability to apply for BadgerCare+ online and nearly half of respondents are either unsure or misinformed about the fact that nearly all kids, regardless of income, are eligible for BadgerCare+.

Bottom Line: BadgerCare+ outreach in CHILD schools was noticed and well received, but more work remains to be done across the state when it comes to more specific information parents may need about Wisconsin’s public health insurance program.



Save the Date
covering kids & families
Fall Annual Meeting
Tuesday, October 12, 2010

Location: TBD

No Registration fee

For more information about the Meeting:
 — contact Mary Unmuth at mjunmuth@wisc.edu
 — call Mary at 608-261-1455
 — check out **covering kids & families**’ web site at:

www.ckfwi.org

“Most districts now have routine methods of identifying and reaching out to families who are uninsured, and some districts are aided by local community-based organizations or county agencies, which bodes well for sustainability of the efforts schools are undertaking.”

--Jean Nothnagel

Interviews with Connecting Health Insurance to Lunch Data (CHILD) Participants

by Jean Nothnagel



“Before we were involved in the project . . . we were fragmented about how we were going to help [uninsured] families. Now we feel we have some strategies.”

**Health Coordinator
Pilot School District**

Throughout the CHILD project, we have relied heavily on the input and feedback of school staff working with us on this pioneering project.

In addition to regularly checking in with school staff throughout the school year, we again conducted interviews this spring to assess how the project is working. Those interviewed included superintendents, food services directors, pupil services directors, school social workers, health services coordinators, district secretaries, a parent coordinator, a food services director and a health aide.

“Just knowing about it and being able to say, ‘Oh, you don’t have insurance? You can go talk to our school social worker; I know she knows about it [BadgerCare+].’ Something as simple as that was really effective.”

**School Social Work
Pilot School District**

Responses strongly indicate many district staff have increased their knowledge of BadgerCare+ and are increasingly

comfortable collecting student Health Insurance Status to identify uninsured children. Most districts now have routine methods of identifying and reaching out to families who are uninsured, and some districts are aided by local community-based organizations or county agencies, which bodes well for sustainability of the efforts schools are undertaking.

Most CHILD districts had some BadgerCare+ training during the project, and some respondents would like to have a training resource for “refreshing” their prior training or for introducing new district staff to the material.

“I definitely think parents appreciate being able to come in and talk to me about it and not having to go take a number and go get on a bus and go downtown.”

**School Social Worker
Pilot School District**

The CHILD lead staff understand that the end of a school year can be a challenging time for key contacts

to be available for interviews and project activities, and we greatly appreciated the opportunity to touch base one more time. The information school staff provided greatly helps planning for the next phase of this project: making the Toolbox available to districts across the state!

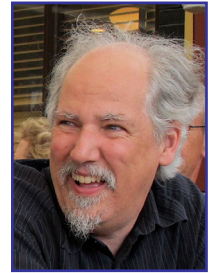
“Viewers [of *Crossing the Finish Line*] see how Wisconsin came to be a leader in health-care coverage and get to discuss the opportunities and challenges that the economy, Federal health reform and our own storied history provide.”

--George Hagenauer

Crossing the Finish Line:

New covering kids & families' PowerPoint Covers What We Have Accomplished and the Challenges Ahead

by George Hagenauer



Wisconsin is one of the states that has made major strides in providing health care coverage to virtually all of its children and their families. Thanks to a strong system of private coverage and a robust public-health-care option in BadgerCare+, supported by the health care industry and community organizations alike, Wisconsin consistently ranks among the best in terms of coverage for its residents.

Understanding the history of public coverage in Wisconsin is especially important now that Federal Health Reform begins to be implemented at the state level.

Crossing the Finish Line is a joint project of [covering kids & families](#) and the Wisconsin Council on Children & Families that documents the 15-year effort to

improve health care access in Wisconsin. Because Wisconsin is one of the states whose eligibility standards exceed the new higher standards in the Health Care Reform bill, implementation of reforms may be a more complex process here than in other states if it is to occur without adding additional financial burden to low-income families already covered, primarily by BadgerCare+.



Crossing the Finish Line is an interactive presentation that

covers the history of BadgerCare+ and provides a summary of the new health-care reform bill and its impacts on Wisconsin families. Viewers see how Wisconsin came to be a leader in health care coverage and get to discuss the opportunities and challenges that the economy, Federal health reform and our own storied history provide.

The presentation is suitable for those steeped in health care intricacies as well as those just tuning in. It can be delivered in 30 minutes, guide discussion for two hours, or anything in between. If your organization or one you know would like to host a *Crossing the Finish Line* presentation, please e-mail info@ckfwi.org.



covering kids & families

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Andy Heidt

Co-Chair Corner

by **Andy Heidt & Jennifer Winter**
Steering Committee Co-Chairs



Jennifer Winter

CORE Program Renewal Season

Over the past few months, those in Milwaukee have been working very hard to renew the first BadgerCare+ CORE members for continuing coverage. As you may know, the first CORE members were mostly transitioned from the Milwaukee General Assistance-Medical Program (GAMP) automatically, so they were not really involved in or aware of the process. This is their first time having to complete an on-line or phone application, submit verification and pay the \$60 application fee. Many have failed to renew, due to the various complexities of urban life, but we continue our outreach efforts to ensure continuing medical coverage for these people. Statewide renewals for the CORE program are just around the corner, and the CORE program members must renew in a timely manner, or they will be placed on the waiting list. So we thought we'd share a few things we learned during our Milwaukee outreach.

Gather and Plan: Take charge of your community by getting a communication committee together. This should include Community Health Providers, Public Health, Libraries, HMOs, pharmacies and other stakeholders.

Get the Word Out: Educate everyone who will be affected. Make a list and split it up among yourselves. Educate the pharmacies, providers, members, hospitals. Use every e-mail list you have to send out the message "that if the CORE folks do not renew on time, they will lose coverage and NOT be able to get it back."

Find Alternate Contact Info: Members' addresses and phone numbers change often, but the pharmacies and clinics often have up-to-date information.

Identify Helping Sites: CORE members can renew the month before their anniversary date on line at www.access.gov or by calling (800) 291-2002. However, we find that many people need help with the process. Find out which agencies might be able to help members with the renewal process and share the list. Be sure to inform your local United Way 2-1-1 Service organization of these community access points as well.