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NEWS RELEASE

Children's Health Insurance

Every child in New York should be able to go to a doctor or hospital when they need it, says Sue Smith Deputy Director of the Otsego County Department of Health. New York's health insurance programs for children, Medicaid and Child Health Plus, cover doctor visits, hospitalization, emergencies and more. And, there are no copayments for services or benefits.

Children must be under the age of 19 and be residents of New York State. Whether a child qualifies for Medicaid or Child Health Plus depends on their family income before taxes.

Your children may be eligible if your family income is as high as \$51,636 a year for a family of four. You may have to pay a small premium contribution for Child Health Plus.

There is no cost to join Medicaid. Children who are not eligible for Medicaid can enroll in Child Health Plus if they don't have health insurance and are not eligible for coverage under the public employees' state health benefits plan.

Each program offers health care through many providers. If your child is enrolled in Medicaid, you may be required to enroll in a managed care plan. If you are not required to enroll in a managed care plan, you may bring your child to any provider who accepts Medicaid.

If your child is enrolled in Child Health Plus, you will be given a choice of managed care health plans and a choice of providers in the plan you pick.

New York State is committed to providing health insurance to the nearly 400,000 uninsured children in the state and to encourage enrollment in Medicaid and Child Health Plus as part of this effort.

You can find out about both programs by calling the Child Health Plus hotline at 1-800-698-4KIDS (1-800-698-4543). An application and a list of plans in your area are available through the hotline. You can also get information on where help is available to assist you in applying.

There are organizations in your community that can help you apply for Medicaid and Child Health Plus. Their staff members, called facilitated enrollers, are experienced, speak a variety of languages and offer help at night and on the weekend.

To learn more about Medicaid or Child Health Plus, visit the New York State Department of Health web site at www.nyhealth.gov.

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