



Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

One Union Station
Providence, RI 02903
401/351-9400
401/351/1758

Press Advisory

What?

Tanya Broder, JD, from the National Immigration Law Center will speak at the *Covering Kids & Families Rhode Island Leadership Council* meeting as part of *Cover the Uninsured Week*.

Ms. Broder will speak about the importance of continuing to provide health insurance coverage for undocumented children and will share lessons from other states.

The *Covering Kids & Families Leadership Council* is a group of diverse leaders representing health care providers, state agencies, government, and advocates that work to reduce the number of uninsured children and families in Rhode Island.

When?

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m., Monday, May 1, 2006

Where?

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
One Union Station
Providence, RI 02903

Why?

May 1 – 7th is *Cover the Uninsured Week*, with events scheduled throughout the state to promote awareness of RIte Care health insurance and health care services available to uninsured Rhode Islanders. *Cover the Uninsured Week* is sponsored nationally by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to promote access to health insurance and to encourage dialogue to make health care affordable and accessible for all Americans.

For more information:

Sonia Rodrigues-Carr, *Covering Kids and Families*,
(401) 351-9400, ext. 15 (day), (401) 323-6685 (evening)

Raymonde Charles, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT,
(401) 351-9400 (day), 401-954-3892 (evening and weekend)

Covering Kids & Families is a national health access initiative for low-income children and families sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is the lead agency for *Covering Kids & Families Rhode Island*.

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For Immediate Release

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**Speaker from National Immigration Law Center
highlights the benefits of providing health insurance coverage
for undocumented children.**

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**Providence, RI, May 1, 2006** – Tanya Broder, JD, Public Benefits Staff Attorney at the National Immigration Law Center will speak at the *Covering Kids and Families Rhode Island Leadership Council* meeting to be held on **Monday, May 1, 2006 from 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.** at One Union Station in the Rhode Island Room. The *Covering Kids & Families Leadership Council* is a group of diverse leaders representing health care providers, state agencies, government, and advocates that work to reduce the number of uninsured children and families in Rhode Island.

Ms. Broder will speak about the importance of continuing to provide health insurance coverage for children regardless of their immigration status, and will share lessons from other states. “Rhode Island has been a leader among states that provide quality health care to all children. Preserving this important program will protect individual and public health, by ensuring that all children have access to the health care they need to grow and learn,” said Ms. Broder. “Washington state’s attempt to shift immigrant children to a more restrictive program in 2002 resulted in increased administrative costs and poor health outcomes that could have been avoided with access to preventive health care. Based on this experience, Washington restored Medicaid-like coverage to low-income immigrant children earlier this year. Rhode Island’s continued success in protecting children’s health can serve as a model for other states.”

Ms. Broder's work at the National Immigration Law Center focuses primarily on analyzing the ways in which federal, state, and local governments have been implementing the welfare and immigration laws passed in 1996. She writes articles and policy analyses, provides technical assistance, co-counsels litigation, and presents trainings to legal and social service providers, legislative staff, and community-based organizations. The National Immigration Law Center conducts policy analysis and impact litigation and provides publications, technical advice, and trainings to a broad constituency of legal aid agencies, community groups, and pro bono attorneys.

Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, noted, "Rhode Island is recognized as a national leader for its commitment to providing affordable high-quality health care coverage for children. The state's investments in RIte Care have improved health outcomes. The proposal to eliminate health care coverage for undocumented children threatens the health and well-being of almost 3,000 children in our schools and our communities. It is important to remember that some of these children are legally present but not eligible for federal Medicaid benefits. The proposed cuts move us in the wrong direction and will erode the gains we have made over the past decade in health care access and outcomes. It is critical that even in difficult budget times we remain committed to providing RIte Care for all eligible children regardless of immigration status. Health care coverage is a proven investment in the health and well-being of our children."

This *Covering Kids and Families Leadership Council* meeting is part of a series of events to recognize *Cover the Uninsured Week* (May 1-7, 2006).

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Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is a statewide children's policy organization that works to improve the economic security, health, safety, education and development of Rhode Island children.

*Covering Kids & Families* is a national health access initiative for low-income children and families sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is the lead agency for *Covering Kids & Families Rhode Island*.