

**New Jersey
Catholic Conference**



**Catholic HealthCare
Partnership of
New Jersey**

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**CATHOLIC BISHOPS AND CATHOLIC HOSPITALS
*LAUNCH HEALTHY KIDS IN OUR CATHOLIC COMMUNITY***

Trenton – In conjunction with *Cover the Uninsured Week* (March 22 – March 29, 2009), the New Jersey Catholic Bishops through the New Jersey Catholic Conference and the Catholic HealthCare Partnership of New Jersey are launching the “Healthy Kids in our Catholic Community” campaign.

The two organizations are joining forces to identify uninsured children in the Catholic community and deliver important information to their families about eligibility for New Jersey FamilyCare and New Jersey FamilyCare Advantage – a state program for those children who do not directly qualify for FamilyCare.

“Many families do not realize that a change in New Jersey’s law requires every child through the age of 18 to have health insurance by the end of July 2009,” said Marlene Lao-Collins, director of social concerns for the New Jersey Catholic Conference. Lao-Collins continued, “It is unconscionable that there are more than 280,000 children in New Jersey who are uninsured; it is a real possibility that some of these children are enrolled in our Catholic schools and in religious education. It is our responsibility as leaders in the Catholic community to educate children and families about the opportunities for free or highly subsidized health insurance.”

The Bishops, together with the Catholic hospitals in New Jersey, have worked tirelessly to support and strengthen New Jersey’s efforts to provide adequate and affordable health care to children.

Father Joseph Kukura president of the Catholic HealthCare Partnership said “I am hopeful that through educating our parishioners we will succeed in increasing the number of children insured by FamilyCare. In addition to working directly through our schools and religious education programs, we are asking our churches to use parish bulletins as an avenue to alert parishioners about FamilyCare.” Father Kukura continued, “We must do everything we can to make certain that all of New Jersey’s uninsured children are enrolled in FamilyCare by the end of July.”

Information about FamilyCare will be delivered to parishioners and Catholic School families through a variety of methods, including: websites; newsletters; church bulletins; PTA announcements and community alerts.

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