



Children's Health Initiative

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San Jose's Healthy Families Outreach Program Emulated Across California Source: KCBS

(KCBS) - San Jose's Children's Health Initiative, which was introduced three years ago, has been so successful, it is now becoming a model for other California communities.

Jim Taylor in the KCBS Santa Clara County Bureau says the Healthy Kids program was originally seen as a social experiment in health care.

Leona Butler, CEO of the Family Health Plan of Santa Clara County, said things have been going "fantastically well."

"Today, we're being able to announce that thanks to the work of this children's health initiative, which is what we're calling it, 25 percent more children were enrolled in the right program than has happened anywhere else in the state," she said.

Butler said 80,000 children have been helped, thanks to the commitment of city leaders.

"We have a very progressive group of supervisors here who said every child in this community has the right to good healthcare through insurance," she said.

"It's become a model for many other counties," said Butler. "San Mateo is doing it. San Francisco, San Joaquin County, Santa Cruz County, and Los Angeles is about to announce it.... There are things available. That's true not only here, it's true through the rest of the state."

County supervisor Jim Beall said the program began with a coordinated outreach campaign to find children who were uninsured and make sure they got insurance.

"It's a really simple idea," he said. "Let's get all the healthcare for all the kids. We should do this statewide. We should have all our kids insured."

Beall told KCBS this was a priority to ensure the health and strength of San Jose.

"The answer for our community is to provide good, quality healthcare for all the kids," he said. "The way out of poverty is through education. We've got to promote that, and this ties right into that."

27 other California counties are now considering similar programs.