

# National Indian Health Board



*The Red Feather Of Hope And Healing*

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For Immediate Release

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## ***Secretary Sebelius Announces \$10 million will be awarded for Outreach to and Enrollment of Indian Children in Medicaid and CHIP***

**Washington, DC** – States have been successful in enrolling children in Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), but many American Indian and Alaskan Native (AI/AN) children are not enrolled even though they are eligible for the programs. Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced today the availability of \$10 million in grants to Tribes and Tribal Organizations, Urban Indian organizations, and Indian Health Service to assist in outreach efforts in AI/AN communities.

“One third of Native children are not insured even though they are qualified,” said Secretary Sebelius who explained that factors such as geography or just the mere hesitancy of parents to apply may be overcome though providing resources for funding outreach efforts.

On February 4, 2009, President Obama signed into law the Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA) which included provisions for increasing outreach funding and activities to enroll eligible, yet non-insured children, in coverage with a particular focus on those who are most difficult to reach.

Sebelius shared the concern that AI/AN children experience health problems such as obesity which may result in heart disease, asthma, or depression. “These grants will help Tribes and Indian health providers reach out to children and families to ensure more children get the health care they need.” Secretary Sebelius encouraged everyone to visit [www.InsureKidsNow.gov](http://www.InsureKidsNow.gov) a White House initiative managed by HHS to insure America’s children.

“This funding will save lives. Meeting the health care needs of our children today is a key in addressing some of the health disparities that our communities face now,” said Reno Keoni Franklin, Chairman of the National Indian Health Board. “We encourage tribes and Indian Health Providers to apply to be a part of the effort to find and enroll uninsured American Indian and Alaska Native children who are eligible for Medicaid or CHIP.”

Cindy Mann, the director of the CMS Center for Medicaid and State Operations said, “We are looking forward to innovative grant proposals that will put new outreach, enrollment and renewal systems in place to ensure that uninsured Indian children get enrolled and stay enrolled for as long as they are eligible.”

Grants will be awarded to applicants that will be able to demonstrate increases in enrollment and improved retention of children already in Medicaid and CHIP. Grant applications will be due by January 15, 2010 and grants will be awarded on April 15, 2010.

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*The National Indian Health Board advocates on behalf of all Tribal Governments and American Indians/Alaska Natives in their efforts to provide quality health care. Visit [www.nihb.org](http://www.nihb.org) for more information.*



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