

Cover The Uninsured Week: Get Involved!

Cover the Uninsured Week is a week-long series of events which will be held March 10-16, 2003, in communities nationwide. Former Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter will serve as honorary co-chairs, and the event is organized and funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and a number of other national organizations. Activities will include hundreds of grassroots events, in addition to a national kick-off in Washington, D.C.

The week-long awareness campaign is the perfect illustration of the need United American's Underage Health plans address. Find out more about your community's events by visiting www.coveringtheuninsured.org. Here at *Vision*, we decided to do our part and publish the following facts to help increase awareness of the uninsured population.

Did You Know?

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that 41.2 million Americans were uninsured in 2001, up 1.4 million from 2000.

A joint study by the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Health Research and Education Trust states that, of the employers surveyed, 44 percent report that they are "very" or "somewhat" likely to increase employee contributions for health premiums in the next year.

The Commonwealth Fund study indicates that unemployment leads to loss of health insurance — 37 percent of workers who lose their jobs also lose health coverage.

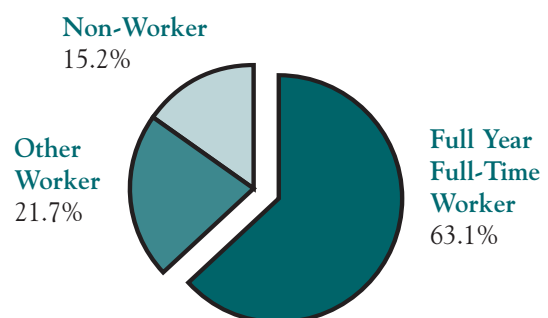
A Families USA report finds that uninsured people with chronic conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure, arthritis, and high cholesterol receive fewer lab tests, fewer health care visits, and fewer prescription medicines than those with insurance.

Research from the American College of Physicians and the American Society of Internal Medicine indicates that uninsureds tend to be sicker upon admission to the hospital and are significantly more likely than privately insureds to face life-threatening situations once admitted.

"Most people here are self-employed or working for small businesses. What bothers me are the misconceptions about the uninsured. Many people see us as uneducated and lazy. The truth is that all of the uninsured people in our area work hard, like we do, sometimes at several jobs. I don't understand how it's gotten to the point where people like us have to go without something so basic as health coverage...It just doesn't seem right."

Uninsured mother of four, via
www.coveringtheuninsured.org

Nonelderly Uninsured by Work Status of Family Head



Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute estimates from the March Current Population Survey, 2001 Supplement.