

The Kid Angle

Kid-focused news from First Focus on Children

500+ organizations push for children's health care
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Advocates (and voters) love CHIP:

[More than 500 local and national organizations](#) representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico joined First Focus Campaign for Children this week in urging Congress to make the Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP) permanent.

"For almost 25 years, CHIP has been an essential source of children's coverage," the groups said in the letter. "Making CHIP permanent is critical so families, medical providers, and governors can depend on it to always be there."

A [pre-election survey by Lake Research Partners](#) found that American voters — regardless of political party — strongly support making CHIP permanent (68–20 percent).

Aimed at families who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but too little to afford private health insurance, CHIP provides care to 10 million children annually. **CHIP is also the only federal health insurance program subject to expiration.** In 2017, CHIP expired for more than 4 months – endangering the health care of millions of children.

The Children's Health Insurance Program Permanency (CHIPP) Act (H.R. 1791) would prevent another lapse by providing permanent funding and would also allow states to more easily expand eligibility up to 300% of the federal poverty level, increasing access to the program.

Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-CA), lead sponsor of the CHIPP Act, outlined the bill's provisions [in a conversation with First Focus Campaign for Children](#).

"We can make sure parents never have to worry again whether their children will have access and will be covered," Rep. Barragán [tells First Focus President Bruce Lesley](#). "It's the right thing to do."

The opioid settlement: What's in it for the kids?

Three major U.S. drug distributors and a pharmaceutical giant reached a \$26 billion deal with states this week that, if approved, would end nearly 4,000 lawsuits and clear the way for distribution of billions of dollars. The money reportedly would go toward addiction treatment and prevention.

Which is great news. But we still have one question: **What about the children?**

- More than [4 million children](#) nationwide live with an addict.
- More than 250,000 children have [lost a parent to opioids](#).
- More than [500 children die every year](#) from opioid poisoning, and [every 15 minutes](#) a baby is born addicted.
- More than 400,000 children are in foster care. [36% of them are there because of parental drug use](#).
- In 2017, the rate of children entering foster care due to parental drug use [rose for the sixth consecutive year](#).

Children have arguably borne the brunt of this epidemic (sound familiar?).

What's in this deal for them? First Focus on Children convened a group of experts who developed **12 recommendations for prioritizing** — or, at the very least, *including* — children in the opioid settlements playing out. Before states sign on to this agreement, we hope they'll have a look. Someone has to make a case for helping the children.

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First Focus on Children

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