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Contact: Samantha Levine, 212-697-0775

NY ACHIEVES BIG DECLINE IN NUMBER OF UNINSURED CHILDREN

The number of New York children without health insurance fell by about 19.5% the first year the Affordable Care Act went into effect, according to a new report by Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families.

The Georgetown study examined American Community Survey data compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau. It estimated that the number of uninsured children in New York declined from 171,000 in 2013 to 138,000 in 2014.

"For New York to see such a huge drop in children without health insurance required years of hard work and commitment, and we applaud the state leaders who made it happen," said Melanie Hartzog, Executive Director of the Children's Defense Fund - New York. "These improvements to health care coverage for New York's children will not only help families, they will help New York's schools, health care system and economy. We look forward to working with our allies and partners to leverage these successes to fully eliminate the un-insurance rate for children state-wide."

Joan Alker of the Georgetown University research center concurs: "When children have health care coverage, they are able to get the preventive care they need to stay healthy and show up for school ready to learn," said Alker. "It also means their families can afford to take their children to the doctor when they are sick so they don't wind up getting sicker and having to rely on more expensive care in the hospital."

The report also notes that improvements to children's coverage have been shown to provide a strong return on government investment. Research shows that children with Medicaid coverage were less likely to drop out of high school and more likely to graduate from college. They also had better health and economic success as adults.

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