



Missourians to End Poverty

Bringing the Community Together to End Poverty

Food Health Education Energy & Housing Family & Economic Security

www.communityaction.org

Who are the
*Missourians to
End Poverty?*

AmerenUE

Beyond Housing- St. Louis

Cafe Via Roma

Catholic Charities
Archdiocese of St. Louis

Catholic Charities of Kansas
City - St. Joseph, Inc.

Citizens for Missouri's
Children

Community Action Agency of
St. Louis County

Community Action Partner-
ship of Greater St. Joseph

Community Awareness and
Resource Exchange (CARE)

Social Concerns Office -
Diocese of Jefferson City

Eileen Wallace Consulting

Faith Beyond Walls

Gardner Capital, Inc.

Green Hills Community Action
Agency

Health Care Foundation of
Greater Kansas City

Kansas City Power and Light

Laclede Gas Company

Lutheran Family & Children's
Services of Missouri

Madsen & Wright
Governmental Consultants

Health Care Policy Statement

To reinforce the policy platform of Missourians to End Poverty, our policy statements center around the intertwined five pillars of poverty: **health care, housing & energy, economic & family security, food, and education**. Our goal is to raise community awareness and understanding of the impact of poverty as well as create concrete ideas with communities about local and state solutions to ending poverty.

The State of Missouri could go a long way in improving the lives of its distressed families by moving in the direction of providing quality, affordable, health care to all Missouri families.

One of the most significant impediments for Missouri families to accessing a quality, affordable health care system is a lack of health insurance coverage. In our state most Missourians access health care with employer provided insurance. But in our system of employer provided insurance, all too often those at the lowest levels of income are not provided coverage by their employer. This creates a system that forces those with the lowest incomes to pay out of pocket for their health care, while those at higher incomes receive employer subsidies.

The Census Bureau estimated that in 2007-2008 the number of uninsured Missourians was 734,000 but a study done by FamiliesUSA estimated that one in three Missourians under the age of 65 went without insurance during that time. Nearly 1.5 million Missourians had gaps in coverage and most of them (71.9%) for 6 months or longer, threatening their health and their economic well-being. Many of those are working poor. This lack of coverage causes Missouri families to access the health care system in inconsistent and inefficient ways that imperils their well being and raises the health care cost for all Missourians.

Public Policy Action Strategies to Provide Access to Healthcare by:

- Maximizing federal participation in state based coverage programs such as MoHealthNet (Medicaid and CHIP) that provide health coverage to distressed families.
- Extend or make permanent the increase in the Federal percentage of the Medicaid Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), commonly referred to as "enhanced FMAP".
- Providing access to health care services in rural and underserved areas through a strong network of safety net providers.
- Fund the dental provision in MoHealthNet that provides for reimbursement for dental services.
- Increase access to quality health, dental and vision care for distressed families by supporting increases in reimbursement rates to health providers.
- Allow individuals, families and small business to buy into a statewide consolidated health plan that would spread risk and lower cost.

Missourians to End Poverty continued...

Missouri Association for Community Action

Missouri Association for Social Welfare

Missouri Budget Project

Missouri Career Center

Missouri Department of Mental Health

Missouri Department of Social Services, Family Support Division

Missouri Family Health Council

Missouri Food Bank Association

Missouri Gas Energy

Missouri Head Start Association

Missouri Head Start Collaboration Office

Missouri Health Alliance

Missouri IMPACT

Missouri Kidney Program

Missouri National Education Association

Missouri Public Service Commission

Northwest Workforce Investment Board

Ozarks Food Harvest

Partnership for Children

Primaris/CLAIM

Ready Aim Advocate!

Salvation Army

Treasures

United Services Community Action Agency

United Way of Central Missouri

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency

- Reduce the “spend down” provision that forces Missourians with disabilities to spend themselves into poverty before they can receive benefits.
- Provide support services to Missourians with disabilities and elderly poor that allows them to stay in their community and out of costly institutions.

Children’s Health

- It is estimated that 132,200 children in Missouri do not have health care coverage. Of that total, approximately 87,000 children are eligible to participate in the state children’s health insurance program (SCHIP).
- Support Minority and Women’s Health Program within MoHealthNet.
- Fund nurse home visitation for at risk babies and families.

Children’s Health Insurance

- Increase enrollment and retention of children in MO HealthNet for Kids (Missouri) by:
 - Supporting innovative ways to reach out to eligible, yet unenrolled children
 - Removing administrative barriers
 - Implement express lane eligibility
 - Establish a 6 or 12 month continuous enrollment
 - Use school based outreach to identify eligible children using Free/Reduced lunch criteria
 - Implement administrative renewals
 - Include a new section in state tax return forms that would allow people to indicate whether their dependent children have health insurance
 - Establishing a state children’s health insurance buy-in program

Childhood Obesity

- Promote active living lifestyles and healthy eating by supporting state and local policies that increase school physical education requirements and improve access to fresh foods and school-based nutrition services.

Mental Health

- Achieve mental health parity.
- Fund treatments that keep people independent and out of institutions and hospitals, ultimately saving the state money in the long term.
- Maintain consistent formularies that are crucial to the stability of the patient.

Support Our Safety Net System of Health Care Providers

- Maintain local and state support for the network of non-profit “safety net providers” such as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), Rural Health Centers, and Tier One Safety Net Hospitals. These facilities see high volumes of MoHealthNet and uninsured patients and benefit from a blended revenue stream that provides access to primary and emergent care for Missouri’s distressed families.
- Support free clinics that provide basic care to Missourians with no ability to pay and no ability to access coverage.