

SCHIP

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her medical bills would have reached tens of thousands of dollars. Now seven, the girl is a stellar student who wants to be a doctor.

SCHIP doesn't just save the day in emergencies. It also eases children's chronic suffering. In poor city neighborhoods, where housing stock is often vermin- and mold-infested, asthma abounds in children. The only way to contain the problem is through daily controller medications, administered even when symptoms have subsided.

Cash-strapped parents are usually tempted to save the drugs for when the child is desperately sick: a prescription for emergency hospitalization. Not only does the ER end up costing government thousands of dollars in free care, but severe episodes of childhood asthma cast a shadow in adulthood, leading to chronic pulmonary problems and often premature death. SCHIP can help avert these complications by ensuring access to both the drugs and the doctors who can explain the proper medical regimen.

A 2006 study in the journal *Pediatrics* found that in New York state, uninsured children with asthma fared dramatically better after a year's enrollment in SCHIP; they had fewer asthma-related attacks than before, fewer doctor's visits, and fewer hospitalizations. SCHIP pays for mental healthcare — another urgent need among poor and immigrant groups, who suffer high rates of depression and behavioral problems.

"In urban areas, you have children with post-traumatic stress disorder — usually the result of domestic violence, being a witness to violence," said Philip Severin, M.D., medical director at Boston's Codman Square Health Center.

"Those are issues that are difficult to treat, in general — but impossible to treat without insurance backup."

In all these cases, SCHIP pays for evaluation, diagnoses, psychological therapy, psychiatric care, and medication. Ac-

ording to Arauz Boudreau, "You can see a child being freed from her demons."

SCHIP also prevents disease from striking in the first place, in routine well-child visits. By paying for scheduled immunizations and booster shots from infancy through young adulthood, it helps stave off once-familiar infectious scourges: measles, chickenpox, bacterial pneumonias.

The Bush administration's rule that kids must be uninsured for a year before becoming SCHIP-eligible is irrational: medically, fiscally and socially.

"Healthy children translates into healthy adults," said Stephaine Hale, M.D., a neonatologist at Boston's Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, and co-author of a recent report by the Commonwealth Fund that analyzes SCHIP's benefits. "The concept is: Into school ready to learn, leave school ready to work. Everyone talks about the business case, but it's a broader societal goal. SCHIP doesn't just benefit the children it directly affects — it benefits all of society. Either you pay for it upfront, or you pay for it in the end."

If SCHIP expires, American families will pay for it both upfront and long term.

"For families of kids to be without any kind of insurance — you never know what's going to happen tomorrow or the next day," said Dedra Lewis. "If I had to wait a year before I became eligible for SCHIP, my daughter would have been blind."

Added Mass General's Arauz Boudreau, "We're talking about children — we're not just talking about numbers."

From her vantage point, the difference between 200 percent of federal poverty level and 400 percent is meaningless.

"I understand why we have to have certain cutoffs. But when you're looking at a child, you're not looking at a cutoff," Boudreau said.

Madeline Drexler is a medicine and public health author.

Feud

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proceeded towards the cameras. It was obvious something was not running smoothly in the leadership camp.

"It was hard to work with the egos," said Ernest Johnson, president of the Louisiana State Chapter of the NAACP. "We saw a draft of a contract between Casepta Bailey (Mychal Bell's mother) and Sharpton, which made us very concerned. It seemed like this was to promote someone's career," said Johnson.

In a letter to Sharpton dated Oct. 1, Johnson accused him of sowing discord by demanding Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Blanco not allow the NAACP members to be present at Mychal Bell's release from jail.

For the record, the NAACP asserted it had been working on the Jena Six case since January and was very instrumental in the release of Bell. Johnson claimed Sharpton seemed not to have a clue what to do except keep the media hype going.

Other groups chose to stay out of the media limelight and focus on the issue.

Alan Bean, executive director of Friends of Justice, made 17 trips down to Jena, La., since January after he heard about the case. "We wanted to get justice for these students by countering false narratives by local media and the judicial system," said Bean.

Bean said those groups pictured the incident involving the attack of Justin Barker, a White student in Jena and what came before it. "The media tried to portray the Black youth as a group of street thugs who beat Justin simply because he was White. But it was not true, and we wanted to get the message out," said Bean.

Bean said the placement of nooses around the tree by White students was the key to the whole story. Bean watched as the "media hounds" started coming to town and watched the dynamics from a distance. Bean said, "There may have been some groups there with underlying motives. We just wanted to get justice for the kids."

Bell's father, Marcus Jones, had earlier told media that he personally invited Sharpton into the fight to help free his son. Jones was a guest on several of Sharpton's radio programs.

Valencia Muhammad writes for the Afro-American Newspapers.

Your Horoscope Says... October 11-17

ARIES

Set a limit on what you can do for others this week. You'll enjoy your feelings more if you are straightforward about refusing a less than appetizing assignment. Trust your feelings and say "No, I won't." Clarity will help you define yourself.

Soul Affirmation: I master life by mastering myself.

Lucky Numbers: 23, 45, 48

TAURUS

Business looks good this week as you discover a new way of increasing exposure to your product. Let hope and optimism lead you into new beginnings and fresh starts. All vibes are good. Go!

Soul Affirmation: I enjoy flirting with new ideas.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 17, 27

GEMINI

You seem preoccupied this week and it's because your mind is filled with a vision of love for the entire planet. Use your gifts to assist others in seeing the world as you do, in glorious color. Check the details on paperwork that you have to do, dreamer.

Soul Affirmation: I release internal pressure by enjoying the beauties of the world around me.

Lucky Numbers: 22, 34, 54

CANCER

Do you realize that you are the only one who can tell you what to think and how to feel? Let go of any behaviors that are keeping you from achieving the things you want to achieve. Be creative and positive this week.

Soul Affirmation: In order for money to come, I must think about money as my friend.

Lucky Numbers: 45, 49, 51

LEO

At work, some matters have been on hold but now you will get the green light. Continue to work as diligently as you have been in the past to ensure success. Have faith that your plans are on target.

Soul Affirmation: Anticipation of a beautiful immediate future lights up my week.

Lucky Numbers: 18, 53, 55

VIRGO

A message this week may necessitate travel on your part, and you may feel obligated to do something you don't want to. Let the energy flow past you and do what you think is best. Who you are is who you are — be glad about it!

Soul Affirmation: People love me when I love them.

Lucky Numbers: 9, 22, 41

LIBRA

Use better judgment with regard to financial matters. Stop rationalizing. Money is important. Do something about the fact that you might find yourself broke more often than you wish. Continuing to deny it will delay doing something about it.

Soul Affirmation: I find comfort in the familiar.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 22, 52

SCORPIO

This week, make your spiritual interest pay off in cash. Enough of goodness for goodness' sake. You've got bills to pay. People expect generosity from a bighearted person like you. Ask them for something in return, or they'll drain you.

Soul Affirmation: I call on my creative talents to pay my bills.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 3, 8

SAGITTARIUS

Compromise to get what you want

this week. You'll want to meet others half way, and in the long run, you'll get what you want anyway. You can afford to be gracious and giving. Do it with all your heart and soul.

Soul Affirmation: My emotions provide me a pathway into the sunshine of my being.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 17, 43

CAPRICORN

Money matters may seem a little unstable this week; postpone a shopping trip. On the plus side, however, your friends are unusually supportive and wonderful. You'll enjoy conversations and being with another, especially after dark!

Soul Affirmation: I enjoy working with others this week.

Lucky Numbers: 19, 30, 50

AQUARIUS

Personal goals are important to you this week, and you'll want to budget some time to spend on formulating plans for your brilliant future. Something that happens without your knowledge is going to prove to be a huge benefit. Enjoy your lucky streak!

Soul Affirmation: My life itself is my greatest creation.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 40, 43

PISCES

Your straight-up attitude is going to come in handy this week. Plain talk is favored; keep it simple so others will understand where you're coming from. You'll get a lot done if you stick to a plan this week.

Soul Affirmation: I forgive, forget and keep on moving towards my good fortune.

Lucky Numbers: 10, 29, 31

LEGAL NOTICES

A better commute starts when we work together

We know transportation is important to you. At our Public Participation Plan open house, let us know how you would like to get transportation information. Tell us what transportation issues matter to you and learn more about current and upcoming transportation projects.

Learn more at our open house or visit rtcnsnv.com

Public Participation Plan Draft Review and Comment Open House
Tuesday Oct. 16, 2007
4p.m. to 6 p.m.

Regional Transportation Commission, Room 108
600 S. Grand Central Parkway
Las Vegas, NV 89106

Comment in person, on line, or by phone

Comments will be accepted
Oct. 16 to Nov. 28, 2007.

Comments may be sent to Ginny Cebe at the address above or via fax, phone or Web site.

Questions: (702) 676-1606
TDD (702) 676-1834
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To request sign language interpreters, please call (702) 676-1606 at least 24 hours before the meeting. Spanish interpreters will be available.

