

Support Services for Health & Nutrition

Adapted from Covering Kids and Families

We have all heard the phrase, “Their future is in our hands.” And yes, as parents, grandparents, teachers, and community members the decisions we make and actions we take definitely affect our children. However, another way to look at this is to realize that reciprocally, “Our future is in their hands.” Our collective future depends on the well-being of all our children. Until economic development results in better paying jobs, families should know that there are many helpful programs not just for poor Wisconsinites, but also those with jobs who are struggling to make ends meet.

Low Cost/Free Health Care is Available!

Many programs help families get free or low cost health care. Medical Assistance, Healthy Start and BadgerCare are the most common. Working and non-working families are eligible.

Benefits include:

- Doctor visits
- Hospital stays and surgery
- Prenatal care
- Check-ups
- Immunization shots
- Eyeglasses
- Hearing aids
- Prescription drugs
- Family planning
- Speech therapy
- Physical/Occupational therapy
- Mental health services
- Lab and x-rays
- Alcohol-drug addiction care
- Dental care
- Transportation to care
- Emergency room care

You and your children may be able to get help with health care if you:

- Are pregnant or you have children under age 19 living with you;
- Have income under 185% of the Federal Poverty Level

The most important thing to do is apply for these programs, even if you are not sure if you qualify.

For **each person** applying for Family Medicaid, you will need to know the following information:

- Social Security Number
- Date of birth
- Marital status
- Citizenship status
- Employer’s name and address
- Income (wages and whether income is yearly, monthly, or weekly)
- Health insurance coverage (name of insurance company, policy number, and who is covered under the policy)

Need Help?

Contact: 1-800-722-2295,
or your county/tribal
human/social services department,
or go to www.access.wi.gov

Other Helpful Programs

► FoodShare (Food Stamps)

Provides a debit card for families to use at grocery stores to buy healthy food. Most families who are eligible for FoodShare are working, but do not make enough money to fully support their families. Others who often qualify are disabled and cannot work, have lost their jobs or are living on small fixed incomes. Contact your county human/social services office.

► Wisconsin Shares

Pays for some of the childcare costs for families with limited incomes. You may qualify if you have a child under 13 or a child with special needs under 18. You need to be either working or in school or job training. Your income must be less than 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. Contact your county human/social services office or 1-800-722-2295.

► WIC

The Women, Infants and Children Program provides healthy foods and referrals to health care for pregnant women, new mothers, infants and children under age five. You or your children may qualify if you are under 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. You may also qualify if you are enrolled in Healthy Start or other health programs. Contact your county human/social services office or 1-800-722-2295.

► Wisconsin Works (W-2) Cash Assistance

If you have children under age 19 living with you, if you have lost your job and do not qualify for Unemployment Insurance, or if you are under 115% of the Federal Poverty Level, you may be able to get help through W-2. Contact your county public health office or 1-800-722-2295.

www.access.wi.gov

ACCESS is a quick and easy way to see if Wisconsin's health care, food and other programs can help you and your family. **It's free, private, and takes just 15 minutes.** ACCESS will tell you if you might be able to get help through programs including:

- ✓ Family health care coverage
- ✓ FoodShare (Food Stamps)
- ✓ Prescription drugs for seniors
- ✓ WIC
- ✓ Nursing home or in-home care
- ✓ Emergency Food Assistance
- ✓ School and summer meals
- ✓ Tax credits

Many programs will look at your income to see if it is below a certain limit. Besides money from your job, income can include money from worker's compensation, unemployment or other sources. But you may also be able to reduce your income if you have child care costs, heating bills, or other costs.

For BadgerCare, WIC, School Meals, and other programs, here are some **examples** of income limits. These are not exact because your situation may be different. **Even if you are over these limits, you should still apply.**

Family Size	Income by Year, or	Income by Month, or	Income by Week
2	\$23,736	\$1,977	\$456
3	\$29,767	\$2,480	\$572
4	\$35,798	\$2,983	\$688

IMPORTANT: These numbers are for 2005. They will go up after March 1, 2006.

Source: Covering Kids and Families. (2005).
www.ckfwi.org

This document can be made available in alternative formats, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape, by contacting your county Extension office. (TTY 1-800-947-3529)

Adapted by: Joan E. LeFebvre, Professor, Department of Family Development, University of Wisconsin-Extension
Reviewer: Michael Jacob, MPA, Project Coordinator, Covering Kids and Families - Wisconsin
Layout: Penny Otte, Program Assistant III, Family Living Area Office, Vilas County

For more information on Parenting and Child Development, contact: Joan E. LeFebvre, Area Family Living Agent, University of Wisconsin, Extension, 330 Court Street, Courthouse, Eagle River WI 54521-8362, 715-479-3653, FAX 715-479-3605, E-Mail joan.lefebvre@ces.uwex.edu January, 2006