



Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign

Back-to-School Planning: Gearing Up to Learn with Medicaid and CHIP

WEBINAR TRANSCRIPT | JULY 23, 2024

Jenn Kerr: Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign webinar, Back-to-School Planning, Gearing Up to Learn with Medicaid and CHIP. My name is Jenn Kerr, and I'm from Porter Novelli Public Services. I work closely with the Campaign and the team at CMS as a contractor to support education and outreach to families eligible for free or low-cost health coverage through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP. I'm looking forward to moderating the discussion today.

Jenn Kerr: Parents and caretakers are gearing up to send their children back to school, and I'm sure many of your organizations are also planning to start, or have started, your own back-to-school outreach programs. Today, you'll hear from experts from the Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services, the Division of Adolescent and School Health, and the Greater Flint Health Coalition. Our speakers will discuss the importance of vaccine outreach during this back-to-school season, how healthy schools can support the whole child, best practices for partnering with organizations in your community, and tools to support outreach and enrollment efforts that help connect kids to coverage.

Jenn Kerr: Before we get started, I do want to touch on a few housekeeping items. If you've joined this webinar on the Webex desktop platform, you'll see a few features that will be helpful to you during today's presentation. We encourage you to submit any questions you have into the Q&A box. We will either respond back in the Q&A box, or respond verbally during the Q&A portion at the end of this presentation. For any questions that we are not able to get to, we will try to follow up with individuals separately after the webinar via email. This webinar is going to be recorded, and we will be posting the recording and presentation to [InsureKidsNow.gov](https://www.insurekidsnow.gov) in the coming weeks. During the presentation, our team will also be dropping links from our presenters in the chat for you to access as they share resources. These will also be available via the slide deck when posted on [InsureKidsNow.gov](https://www.insurekidsnow.gov).

Jenn Kerr: I would now like to pass it over to Meg Barry, director, Division of State Coverage Programs at Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, for an official welcome.

Meg Barry: Thanks, Jenn. Hello and welcome everyone. Like Jenn said, I'm Meg Barry, I'm the director of the Division of State Coverage Programs at CMS. Thank you for joining us today to learn about how Medicaid and CHIP can help prepare children to gear up to learn as they head back to school.

Meg Barry: As a parent to school-age kids myself, I know their focus right now is on embracing all of the fun that summer brings, but I also know that many of us are currently hard at work preparing for the back-to-school season. My husband was just filling out school health forms last week. We know that having access to health coverage can improve students' academic performance and their long-term health, and we know that schools can serve as an access point to connect kids and teens to important healthcare services. That's why I'm really excited to welcome our speakers today.

Meg Barry: Our speakers are experts in their field, and are prepared to discuss a variety of topics that center around getting kids and teens covered and ready for school. We'll hear from CMCS's chief medical officer about the importance of vaccines, from our partners at the CDC on the roles schools play in supporting students' health, and from one of our Connecting Kids to Coverage Healthy Kids grantees on their own experiences collaborating with schools and families to get kids and teens enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP. We have an exciting call today, so I'm going to hand it back to Jenn to get us started.

Jenn Kerr: Thank you so much, Meg, and thank you again to everyone for being here today. I would now like to introduce our first speaker, Dr. Jessica Lee, acting chief medical officer for the Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services. Dr. Lee, over to you.

Dr. Jessica Lee: Thank you so much, and thank you all for joining us today and for all of your ongoing work. I am so happy to be able to spend some time talking about the role of vaccines on the back-to-school checklist. We're going to talk through a few key messages today regarding the safety and effectiveness of vaccines, how they're covered by Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, and the important context of catching up on vaccinations after the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a public health initiative for which many of you are already partners, and I'm going to also outline opportunities and resources to help prevent disruptions to school and learning from vaccine-preventable illnesses. Next slide, please.

Dr. Jessica Lee: The first key message is that vaccines are safe. Vaccines go through a rigorous process, shown on this slide, from the CDC. You can see that every stage of the vaccine lifecycle is supported by extensive research on safety and efficacy, with subsequent reviews by expert panels that make recommendations about vaccine use. This shows how vaccines are carefully and extensively evaluated to know that vaccines we are giving our kids are safe when they go to market, when they're offered, and then continuously that they're monitored through multiple systems. Next slide, please.

Dr. Jessica Lee: The second key message is that vaccines are effective. Vaccines work by helping the body's immune system learn how to fight germs and prevent more serious illness, or in very severe cases, even death. Right now, there are vaccines available to prevent 14 different types of infectious diseases. I've alluded to some of them here, specifically measles, influenza, hepatitis A, tetanus, pertussis, and varicella, and note also that there's new opportunities to prevent RSV for infants as well. Routine vaccinations are our best defense against illnesses that can make kids seriously ill, and they're a key tool that can keep kids healthy in school and ready to learn. Next slide, please.

Dr. Jessica Lee: The third message I want to leave you with is that these vaccines are covered in Medicaid and CHIP. Through coverage in Medicaid and CHIP, parents can rest assured that their kids' vaccinations and booster shots are covered at no cost to families. When scheduling appointments for their children, parents and caregivers should make sure that their children are also up-to-date on routine vaccinations. Medicaid and CHIP also cover many other services, as this audience likely knows, so helping people enroll and maintain their coverage is helpful for many reasons, including access to vaccines at no cost for families. Next slide, please.

Dr. Jessica Lee: While most children remain up-to-date, the annual assessment of kindergartners' vaccinations show that they fell behind on routine vaccinations during the COVID-19 pandemic, and haven't recovered to pre-pandemic levels. This creates a risk for outbreaks of diseases such as measles. Children and teens can still catch up on their vaccinations even if they start late. This routine immunization catch-up is a shared goal that we can achieve by working together, amongst individuals like public health professionals, healthcare providers, school leaders, and trusted community messengers. I've listed two resources from the CDC, their Let's RISE back-to-school materials, and also some resources on routine vaccinations under Keep It That Way, both of which can be helpful in terms of identifying correct and up-to-date information. Next slide, please.

Dr. Jessica Lee: So as this audience can likely attest, there really is an important role for partners, including community leaders, schools, and healthcare professionals, to help check off routine vaccinations from this fall's back-to-school list.

Dr. Jessica Lee: Actions that can help include making vaccines easy to find and access, using data to identify individuals in communities behind on vaccinations, encouraging vaccinations through reminders and outreach, such as including vaccination information in the back-to-school communications, and knowing where to find accurate information on routine vaccines, and helping to carry messages about the importance of vaccines. Accurate information can be found on the CDC resources I listed, in addition to our website on [Medicaid.gov](https://www.medicaid.gov).

Dr. Jessica Lee: So with that, I'm going to thank you so much for your time and your ongoing work and partnership, and turn it over to the next presenter.

Jenn Kerr: Thank you so much, Dr. Lee. We appreciate you speaking on the importance of vaccine schedules, and reminding everyone that Medicaid and CHIP cover important childhood vaccines. I'd now like to introduce our next panelist, Melissa Fahrenbruch, program and professional development team lead at the Division of Adolescent and School Health. Melissa, over to you.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: Thank you, Jennifer, and hello everyone. On behalf of the Division in Adolescent School Health, I want to express my gratitude for the opportunity to be included among such esteemed colleagues and present to you all today. Keeping with the back-to-school theme, my presentation portion is going to cover three key components, data, introducing the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model, or WSCC as we like to call it, and tools and resources to support the whole child.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: Last October, the Division of Adolescent and School Health, or DASH for short, and the Healthy Schools branch merged back into one division, as we were over 12 years ago. DASH is now housed in the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. DASH is one of nine divisions in the Chronic Center, led by our amazing director, Dr. Kathleen Ethier. Now, there won't be a quiz on our org chart, so don't worry. So I'm just going to go ahead and jump right in and talk about the work of our division.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: The academic success of America's youth is strongly linked with their health, and is one way to predict adult health outcomes. Health risk behaviors, such as poor nutrition and physical inactivity, are consistently linked to poor grades and test scores and lower education attainment. In turn, academic success is an excellent indicator for the overall wellbeing of youth, and a primary predictor and determinant of adult health outcomes.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: Leading national education organizations recognize the close relationship between health and education, as well as the need to foster health and wellbeing within the educational environment for all students. Schools play a critical role in promoting the health and safety of young people, and helping them establish lifelong healthy behaviors. Research shows that school health programs reduce the prevalence of health risk behaviors among youth, and have a positive effect on academic performance. CDC analyzes research findings to develop strategies for schools to address health risk behaviors among students and create tools to help schools implement these strategies.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: To ensure students are healthy and learning, CDC plays a role with ensuring quality of health education in schools, providing evidence-based guidelines and recommendations for school programs and policy, sharing tools and resources, and providing training and professional development. We do this by funding 16 education and health agencies, three universities, and a tribal nation, to provide them with technical assistance, specialized tools, recommendations, and resources, to help in the work they do for school health. Working with non-governmental organizations to complement and strengthen the work of those state grantees in our school health priority areas.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: We currently fund six national non-governmental organizations that also provide training and technical assistance to the field. We also collect data in our surveillance systems to inform decision-making and evidence-based strategies as well.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: Our chronic work is also centered around the whole child. The whole school, whole community, whole child model, or WSCC, as we like to call it, takes a comprehensive approach to support learning and health and calls for greater collaboration across sectors. WSCC is CDC's framework for addressing health in schools. The model is student-centered and emphasizes the role of the community in supporting the school, the connections between health and academic achievement and the importance of evidence-based school policies and practices. The WSCC model has 10 components, which are in the blue ring, and those are physical education and physical activity, nutrition, environment and services, health education, social and emotional climate, physical environment, health services, counseling, psychological and social services, employee wellness, community involvement, and family engagement.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: In September, our work was featured in the Journal of School Health special issue. It includes eight review articles that focus on the school health components listed on this slide. They probably look familiar because they're also a part of the WSCC model. The introduction outlines the purpose of the special issue and describes the methodology used. A closing commentary speaks to the urgency of considering equity when implementing these strategies to ensure that all students can learn about and practice healthy eating and being physically active. The evidence-based strategies outlined in the research offer a range of options for school leaders to consider based on how acceptable, feasible, and practical these strategies would be to implement within their school environment.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: In the JOSH special issue, there are examples of effective strategies and policies that can be implemented in schools. This shows a few of the strategies that schools can implement. These strategies can be implemented during the school day, as well as before and after school.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: I'd now like to shift and share a few of our tools and resources. All of our tools and resources are free and downloadable on our CDC School Health pages.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: CDC uses surveillance systems administered by our division to gather information and assess health behaviors and attitudes in schools. The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance system, or YRBS, as we like to call it, monitors health risk behaviors among adolescents and young adults at the national, state, territorial, tribal and local levels. You can click on the QR code for data on dietary behaviors, weight, physical activity, tobacco and alcohol use, and other health topics. We have also published research, data tables, fact sheets, and other related resources on the connection between health and academics. Using data from the YRBS. School health profiles monitors school health policies and practices in states, large urban school districts, territories, and tribal governments. An overview of the most recent profiles report and information on how to request data files can be assessed at the other QR code on this slide. Both QR codes will take you directly to the YRBS and school health profile pages.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: And now for my all-time favorite CDC tool, the School Health Index. The School Health Index Self-Assessment and Planning Guide is an online self-evaluation and planning tool for schools. The SHI is built on CDC's research-based guidelines for school health programs that identify the policies and practices most likely to be effective in reducing youth health risk behaviors. The SHI is easy to use and is completely confidential. It is available as an interactive, customizable online tool or downloadable printable version. The School Health Index aligns with the whole school, whole community, whole child model as well.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: This is an example of an activity we like to walk schools through to show the WSCC model in action. These are examples of implementation strategies of how to utilize the WSCC model per component. And the components, again, are the blue ring within the WSCC model. This is a district goal example of how to increase school connectedness through a lens of social and emotional health. And as you can see, you go through each component and it will give specific examples of how you can implement that strategy per each of the components.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: We also have on our WSCC webpage fact sheets, which outline examples of evidence-based strategies and promising practices using the WSCC framework to promote student health

before, during, and after school. Also, these downloadable graphics are available to use in presentations, on websites, and in handouts.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: Our Virtual Healthy School is an interactive tool that shows schools how to support the health and academic achievement of students using the whole school, whole community, whole child model. It is designed for K-12 school staff, state and local departments of health or education staff members and agencies who have an interest in meeting the needs of the whole child. Parents and community members also play a powerful role in supporting our children's health learning and participation. They too can benefit from the VHS as we work together. I just love this tool because you can walk room to room, classroom to classroom, and every classroom or school nurse's office, gymnasium that you click on, it will give you specific tools and resources as well as examples of policies that can be implemented.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: In the midst of our reorg, we currently have two school health web pages, so you can't go wrong when you're searching Google to find school health resources from CDC. We're in the process of merging both into one awesome site for you all to find your school health information.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: So I want to thank you all so much for the opportunity to share our work and our passion of working in the school health space. So I will now pass to Nichole.

Jenn Kerr: Thank you so much, Melissa. We also want to thank you for reviewing those resources to support the whole child and how everyone today can access those important resources. Our final panelist is going to be Nichole Smith, Anderson, senior Director of Programs for Greater Flint Health, Coalition. Onto you, Nichole.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: Awesome. Thank you all so much. I'm so excited to be a part of this panel today. Like my other folks on here, I definitely am excited to be here. So if you want to move to the next slide, just to give a little bit of context about our organization.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: We actually play two roles in our community. So one, we act as a neutral convener or backbone organization. We actually convene about 25 different committees, subcommittees and task forces, all of which that have a different focus or priority. And then we also operate a variety of community-based programs. One of those programs absolutely is Connecting Kids to Coverage program. Next slide line.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: So when we think about partnership development, we are really, really fortunate because we have been able to establish longstanding partnerships with a wide variety of leadership from lots of different places. So we are lucky to be very good friends with public health. So I very much so appreciated the vaccine talk at the start of today. Physicians, hospitals, health systems, business community-based organizations, non-profits, government agencies, policymakers, labor, faith-based partners, obviously residents. And then I think most importantly for today's talk in particular is schools and education. Next slide please.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: So when we talk about best practices for building partnerships, we have a couple of key tenants that we really like to focus on. Number one, we really work to identify a need or a gap to fill. So something that I think we've done collectively as a community, so Flint and Genesee County in particular, we work really hard to not duplicate efforts. And so I think now, generally speaking, we have a good handle on who's really good at one.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: So when a need is identified, we always seek to find the groups of people or the organizations that are really going to be able to solve the problem in the most efficient way. We also work to establish roles and responsibilities. So regardless of what is happening when we look at different projects, we really want to make sure that it's clear who's in what role and what their responsibilities are for the project as a whole.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: We also look to build and maintain trust with our partners. That's something that we do a lot and really often.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: So it's important that our partners trust us and we trust them, and also that our residents and clients and participants trust us as well. So we are continuously working on that. Additionally, we endeavor to be flexible as we know life happens, and so we want to make sure that we can adapt always as needed. Consistently communicating. So I think that's really important just when we look at all of these other items, so making sure that people understand their roles. How we maintain trust is being as transparent as possible and communicating messages certainly does allow for that, and also helps inform that being flexible piece. And then finally making sure that we're always working to build capacity and sustainability. Especially as amongst smaller organizations, we want them to be well positioned for any efforts they're working on in the community. Next slide, please.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: So one of our key partners that I wanted to focus on today is the Genesee Intermediate School District. So this is our key education partner in our community, and this is a nice little map on here. But the GISD actually serves nearly 61,000 students and has over 8,500 educators. It contains 21 public school districts, and it's a pretty diverse group of school districts. So you have the City of Flint that individuals may be aware of. The City of Flint has one of the highest child poverty rates in the nation. And then you also have communities like Lake Fenton and Grand Blanc that have a much higher median income. So there's a wide range of students that are served through this district. In addition to the public school districts, there are also 14 charter schools. Next slide.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: What's wonderful about the GISD is they have a significantly wide range of programs, so we can pretty much get in contact with anyone. So they serve birth to adults. So they have adult education programs, career and technical training, early on college. They have early childhood programs, GISD Head Start and Early Head Start. They have childhood Readiness Programs, they do literacy work, professional learning, and special education. The bolded programs on here are actually programs designed specifically to serve low-income families and children. Next slide.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: So when we consider best places and opportunities for back-to-school outreach, I really wanted to review things that we've identified over time that really, really helped to engage individuals and make sure that if they are in need of Medicaid coverage or CHIP, that we are here to support them. So some places that we've had a lot of success at historically, backpack giveaways, that is something that is very prominent in our community. Usually about three to four weeks out of school starting, you start to see churches and community-based organizations that are actively giving away backpacks. We do our best to be present to make sure that we are connecting with parents that potentially need some coverage. We are big fans of PTA meetings. Oftentimes, they're looking for opportunities to fill agendas and we are happy to step in and teach them a little bit about CHIP and Medicaid coverage.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: We also work really closely with the Head Start programs, so as you get individuals that are just starting schools, so when we're looking at preschool or pre-K or kindergarten, making sure that we're connected to those agencies. So if individuals have a need for insurance, again, we can support it that way. Also, there are a ton of summer back-to-school activities, so whether it's a fair or a festival, we definitely want to partake in those. Additionally, athletics and training camps. So a lot of schools will have open football practices or tryouts. They do free athletic assessments. So anytime we have the opportunity to attend there, we do. And if for some reason we cannot attend in person, we're always able to share our materials pretty widely. Parent-teacher conferences, any sort of back-to-school celebration, we are happy to participate in. One of the pictures on the screen is actually from a back-to-school event.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: And then a couple items that we're working on pretty consistently is making sure that we always have educational material in our newsletters. So each district works a little bit differently, which I'm sure if anybody on this call works with schools, there's an understanding that they're all a little bit different even if they are within the same district in. And so we make sure to provide kind of the [InsureKidsNow.gov](https://www.insurekidsnow.gov) canned text and images so then they can easily insert those into their newsletters. And then also my big dream is to get us on the school lunch menu because people are looking at that every single day. And I think it would be a tremendous opportunity to get notes about health insurance coverage and its importance in front of

people every single day. And then one item that is not on here that I also am kind of dreaming about is I would love for there to be announcements about Medicaid and CHIP coverage during football games and basketball games. So that's also a long-term dream of mine. Next slide, please.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: And then finally, one of the biggest things that we're very excited about when it comes to our partnership with the Genesee Intermediate School District is the use of their program Synergy. So that is the local data system that is utilized by the majority of schools within the GISD. And so what's exciting is that schools will have the option to activate a prompt within the Synergy system for parents and guardians to receive information about our Connecting Kids to Coverage program when they're registering their child online or when completing school paperwork. So I know someone said at the top of the session, "Oh, we're filling out the health paperwork right now." And so it would be during that time that they would get a prompt about insurance. What this does is it'll create an integration that will display a flag about CKC asking if they would like more information and if they consent to their contact information being shared with us so we can reach out and support enrollment.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: And so we are currently working on that with each school. And I will say that this is very exciting and it's been a pretty significant process for a couple of years. We were working on just getting it included on the paperwork and the amount of lead time that the school district needs to just add a checkbox to paperwork was shocking. So we are very excited that they are working to integrate it into their online system. So that is kind of a high-level overview of what we like to do for back-to-School outreach. And I think I am going to hand it off to the next presenter. Thank you all so much.

Jenn Kerr: Thank you so much, Nichole, for sharing with us the great work your organization is doing in your community and how we can all be reaching families to get them enrolled. As a reminder, if you have any questions for today's panelists, please submit them in the Q&A section.

Jenn Kerr: Before we get to the Q&A part of today's webinar, though, I'll be sharing an overview of the Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign and some additional resources that may be helpful during your back-to-school outreach. CMS's Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign reaches out to families with children and teens that are eligible for Medicaid and CHIP to encourage them to enroll their children in the programs and to raise awareness about the health coverage available under these programs. The Campaign conducts annual initiatives tied to priority topics in key times of year, including oral health, back-to-school season, vaccinations, and some other important items like year-round enrollment, multicultural outreach, and rural communities. We have outreach resources tied to these specific topics that are available at our website, which is InsureKidsNow.gov.

Jenn Kerr: The Campaign is currently focusing on several key items, back-to-school, renewals, eligibility, and hard-to-reach populations. We're happy to see so many of you join today to learn more about how to reach families during key moments in time, like the back-to-school season, and hope you can take the information shared today back to your organizations to enhance your outreach. It is important while conducting outreach to make sure families know to keep an eye out for renewal information in the mail and return it as soon as possible to avoid any gaps in coverage. Along with renewals, it is important to also remind families to explore if they qualify for Medicaid, even if they haven't in the past and if they have recently lost coverage to remind them that their children may still be eligible. And finally, the Campaign is currently translating many of our resources like posters and palm cards into a wide variety of languages to help reach all families that may need health insurance.

Jenn Kerr: Speaking of resources, if you're looking for back-to-school-specific resources, we encourage you to check out InsureKidsNow.gov for a variety of materials geared toward returning to classrooms, including digital videos, infographics, social copy, and more. Again, you could access all of these back-to-school resources and more at insurekidsnow.gov. On the screen now is the home page. The resources can be accessed either by visiting the Outreach Tool Library circled on the left or the Initiatives tab circled on the right. If you click on the Initiatives tab, you will receive a menu of topic options, which includes back-to-school and some of the other Campaign priorities we spoke about earlier.

Jenn Kerr: When visiting the Outreach Tool Library, you'll be able to search and review all of the Campaign materials like palm cards, posters, social media content, videos, PSA, template newsletters, and more. The library is updated frequently with new materials to help your organization enhance outreach and get more children and families enrolled. The Campaign also has a customization guide that details how your organization can request free customized versions of many of the Campaign's resources. These customizations include adding your organization's name, logo, and any other relevant state-specific information like FPL numbers and other important information that will be relevant to the families you are conducting outreach within your community. To request customization and review available materials that can be customized, we encourage you to visit the Outreach Tool Library. At the top, there will be a link to the customization guide directions. Please review the guide and email the CMS Division of Multimedia Services at multimediaservices@cms.hhs.gov with your requests and information.

Jenn Kerr: Again, when you visit the Outreach Tool Library, you will see a link to the guide at the top. The guide includes all of these directions and information, as well as the correct email to direct your customization request to. You can see on the screen an example of a customizable piece where you can add your program's name, your website, and phone number, and up to two logos. If you would like to learn more about the Campaign and its resources or have questions that come up after today's webinar, please feel free to email us at connectingkids@cms.hhs.gov. To stay up to date with all of the Campaign's activities, we encourage you to follow [@IKNgov on Twitter](#), now known as X, and sign up for the Campaign Notes e-newsletter, which can also be found on InsureKidsNow.gov. If you do share any of the Campaign's resources, we encourage you to tag us and to use the hashtag [#enroll365](#).

Jenn Kerr: So that wraps up all of our planned presentations today. We will now take some time to answer questions from our attendees. If you haven't already, please submit your questions in the Q&A box. We will do our best to get to all the questions today, but if we aren't able to answer your question, we will follow up with you separately via email.

Jenn Kerr: All right. Our first question is for really any of our attendees today, we have one question from an attendee who asks several states cut the Summer EBT Food Program by \$248 million in federal funds. What can we do to fill the gap?

Melissa Fahrenbruch: Jennifer, this is Melissa. It's not my program, but I was on a webinar with USDA and they do have a SUN Bucks program, which is 120 per child to buy groceries during the summer and I'm going to drop the link in the chat if that's okay.

Jenn Kerr: Yes, please drop the link in the chat, Melissa, I think that would be really helpful for all of our attendees to see. Our next question is for Dr. Lee. Dr. Lee, how could we communicate the safety of vaccines to communities that may be skeptical of them?

Dr. Jessica Lee: Oh, this is such a great question and there's a lot of research just on this very question, and I think one of the things that can really help is two things. First of all, listening to people's concerns because a lot of people who have concerns, many times end up feeling brushed off or not heard by the healthcare community. So I think listening to concerns is really important. And then there's two prongs of strategies that I personally take. One is sharing information and the other is sharing some personal experiences. I'm going to say that I'm a practicing physician. I have one patient that I get my flu shot with her every year. We do it together in clinic. But one of the things I talk to patients about in my clinic, when they're skeptical or concerned, is that I ask permission to share information because I want to make sure that they have all the information they need to make the best possible decision to share their health. So I think entering into a collaborative conversation is a really good first step, and I think people in this particular call are probably really expert at doing that in a lot of other topics.

Jenn Kerr: Thank you so much for answering that question, Dr. Lee. We really appreciate it. All right. Our next question is for Melissa. What are some tips and tricks for introducing the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child program to our partners?

Melissa Fahrenbruch: Oh goodness. There's all kinds of different ways. We have presentations that are very usable at the school district community level. We also have implementation guides that are also on our webpages as well that are step by step, I guess a guide to get you into the WSSC model for you to be able to understand it, how to use it. And I love to use the School Health Index Assessment Guide because it takes each component and you can ask specific questions of a school health council, of a wellness council, and you can walk through step-by-step to find strengths in your school or district or areas to improve upon. And you can come up, after you have your meeting with your wellness council, you can come up with your own school improvement plan that you can then use throughout the school year based on the 10 components of the WSSC model.

Melissa Fahrenbruch: So there's really not a right or wrong way, it's just jumping in. You can also specifically look at each of the 10 components. So for example, school health services. What a great topic with what we're talking about today. You can look at those questions related to, what is the environment like with school health services in your school or in your district? So you can also look at each one separately. But again, what I love about CDC is we love to provide technical assistance. And my contact information is in the presentation. We can definitely drop it in the chat. I love to provide technical assistance as well as my project officer team. So if there are specific questions or specific technical assistance around the WSSC model, let's hop on a call. Let's chat in an email and see what you need.

Dr. Jessica Lee: Speaking of loving CDC, I also want to add, in talking about CDC resources, that in terms of thinking about communication around vaccines, their Let's RISE websites that I mentioned earlier, has strategies for partners and specific roles in the community and the school and the health system in terms of how to talk about vaccines. So I think that's also another great resource.

Jenn Kerr: Thank you, Melissa and Dr. Lee for both hopping into answer that question. All right. Taking a look at our Q&A, we're also seeing someone ask if the CDC back-to-school resources are available in Spanish. I can answer that question, confirming that, yes, almost all of our resources are available in Spanish and we are working on translating a lot of our other materials to a variety of different languages.

Jenn Kerr: If, for some reason, there is a language that you don't see represented on the Campaign website or on [InsureKidsNow.gov](https://insurekidsnow.gov), please reach out to the Campaign and let us know. We are always looking for feedback to make sure that languages are being covered. And this way, we can help you reach your audiences and meet families where they are and make sure that we're not contributing to any additional language barriers.

Jenn Kerr: And also confirming that many new languages for our back-to-school materials were just added as well. So we really encourage everyone to take a look at [InsureKidsNow.gov](https://insurekidsnow.gov), click around the outreach tool library, and see what languages we do have available.

Jenn Kerr: All right. Our next question is for Nichole. One of our attendees asks, "Is Synergy owned by Edupoint? We purchase Synergy in our district in Florida and wondering if it is the same software."

Nichole Smith-Anderson: I believe it is.

Jenn Kerr: Perfect. Thank you so much.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: Yep.

Jenn Kerr: Another question for Nichole. How can we keep families engaged past back-to-school/enrollment, and make sure that they're using their benefits throughout the year?

Nichole Smith-Anderson: Yeah, we've actually created a guide with how to use your benefits, and this was something that we created as part of one of our committees. So I talked about how we are a convener and we a lot of different committees, and so we actually had a couple folks together and really sat down and discussed what are the things we should include in here? What do we need to educate parents about? And I will say what's also really great and a wonderful way to keep them engaged is overall, the school district that we work with is outstanding and they do prioritize those things. So they totally have our back when it comes to education and really promoting health beyond just enrolling in insurance. We've also worked, and we've had a little bit of issue this year, but historically we've done pretty well having some parent mentors to kind of promote the usage of Medicaid and CHIP.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: So it's definitely something that I think continuously evolves and we always have to modify as we go. But certainly creating resources and utilizing existing resources to encourage and educate parents I think is really helpful. And then also just having school districts that are open to really pushing out messaging I think is also a really important piece.

Jenn Kerr: Amazing. Thank you. We have another question coming in. Dr. Lee, hopefully you can help us answer this one, but an attendee asks that, excuse me, are there any resources that they can use to help translate immunization records?

Dr. Jessica Lee: I can't answer that question, but I'd be happy to try to find out the answer to that if we can get the information from whoever asked the question.

Jenn Kerr: Yes, Dr. Lee, confirming we can definitely follow up over email on this question. All right. I'm going to give all of our attendees one last chance to reach out to or include any questions in the Q&A section. Oh, really quickly, Nichole, are you able to share with us the how to use benefits resource so we can put that into the chat for the attendees?

Nichole Smith-Anderson: Yes. It'll just take me a minute to find, so I might have to email it to you later.

Jenn Kerr: That sounds great. We can definitely make sure to include that in the slides that are posted on InsureKidsNow.gov.

Nichole Smith-Anderson: Okay, thank you.

Jenn Kerr: All right, it looks like those are all the questions that we have for our panelists today. One more time. I just want to thank everyone, again, for attending, and I'd like to thank presenters for their time and expertise. As a reminder, we are recording today's webinar and the slides and recording will be available on the InsureKidsNow.gov website within the next few weeks. If you would like to be notified when that happens, please be sure to sign up for the Connecting Kids to Coverage e-newsletter. You can find those signup directions as well on InsureKidsNow.gov. Thank you again for joining and we hope to see you all on future Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign webinars. Enjoy the rest of your day.