

# GOVERNOR WARNER ANNOUNCES 97% OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN ARE NOW COVERED BY FAMIS HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM



Mark R. Warner,  
Virginia's 69th Governor

Governor Mark R. Warner announced on August 25, 2005 that his challenge to insure every eligible child in Virginia's health insurance program for children of low- and moderate-income families has resulted in health coverage for 131,000 more children, or 97 percent of eligible children. More than 400,000 Virginian children are now covered by Medicaid, FAMIS, or FAMIS Plus. The Governor also announced a new marketing campaign for FAMIS, the Family Access to Medical Insurance Security plan, to keep adding enrollment.

"It's critical for every child in Virginia to have health and wellness coverage," said Governor Warner. "When I promised in my campaign that Virginia should and could insure every eligible child, I was hopeful we could make meaningful program reforms, and work much harder to reach every eligible family. Today, I admit I am amazed at the success we have had. We raised the bar, and then exceeded it with a program that is not only the right thing to do, but makes good economic sense."

When Governor Warner took office in 2002, tens of thousands of children eligible for FAMIS were needlessly going without health insurance and in some cases, medical treatment. The changes made during the past three years have increased enrollment to

cover an additional 131,000 uninsured children. Virginia's FAMIS child health insurance program has gone from being one of the worst performing programs in the country to receiving national recognition.

During the announcement event at the VCU Medial Center Gateway Building, Jill Hanken, Co-Chair of Virginia's Covering Kids and Families Initiative, awarded Governor Warner an "A+" on the FAMIS reforms progress report.

"Under Governor Warner's leadership, Virginia's program has eliminated unnecessary barriers so uninsured children can be protected by quality health insurance," said Ms. Hanken.

Additionally, the Governor announced three new programs that took effect this summer with the start of the new fiscal year:

- FAMIS MOMS is a new program that offers comprehensive prenatal care to pregnant women of any age above the Medicaid income level, up to 150 percent of the federal poverty level. The program features the same, simplified application procedures that have proven successful with the child health insurance programs.

- FAMIS Select is a new premium assistance program for FAMIS. FAMIS Select provides \$100 per month per child to a family that chooses to cover their FAMIS eligible child through employer-sponsored or private

health insurance instead of through FAMIS. This allows families to choose the insurance coverage they want and may make it possible for some to buy coverage for the whole family.

- Smiles For Children effectively consolidates pediatric dental services for children through the use of a single Dental Benefits Administrator. This program will improve access to dental services for children by increasing the number of providers. In fact, since implementation on July 1, 2005, the Smiles For Children provider network has added 139 new individual providers. Five counties that previously had no participating dentists now have access to dental services. ■

*For more information about FAMIS programs, go to [www.famis.org](http://www.famis.org) or call 1-866-87FAMIS. Also visit [www.governor.virginia.gov](http://www.governor.virginia.gov) and [www.dmas.virginia.gov](http://www.dmas.virginia.gov)*