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Media Contact: Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; cell: 941-302-1058, Dianne_Shipley@doh.state.fl.us

Program Contact: Virginia Brockman, 941-861-2813; Virginia_Brockman@doh.state.fl.us

Back-to-school preparations: Ensure your child has health insurance

Local health officials remind parents that in addition to immunizations, preschool and school age children should receive routine medical care. This allows health problems that may affect school performance to be addressed in their earliest treatable stage. The Florida KidCare program was established in 1998 to assist families who lack insurance in getting low-cost quality health care for their children.

“Now is the time to enroll children as you are making other preparations for your child’s return to school on Aug. 24,” said Virginia Brockman, Sarasota County Health Department’s Florida KidCare Coordinator. “We know that affordable, quality medical insurance is so important for kids to stay healthy. Having a primary source of care means you can take your kids to the doctor instead of the emergency room when they are sick.”

Coverage in the Florida KidCare program begins once eligibility has been determined and the full premium amount has been received. The amount of each premium is based on household size and monthly income. Most families pay either \$15 or \$20 per family per month; however, some families may pay more. Others may pay nothing at all.

Families are only required to submit one application, which covers all Florida KidCare programs. Assistance with enrollment applications is available at the Sarasota County Health Department, 2200 Ringling Boulevard in Sarasota by calling 941-861-2813. Information about the Florida KidCare program will also be available at the Back to School Resource Fair at Heron Creek Middle School, 6501 W. Price Boulevard in North Port on Saturday, August 15 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Families are also encouraged to apply online at www.Floridakidcare.org. Families who apply online get enrolled faster because their applications tend to be more complete, which reduces the wait time for missing information or income documentation. For more information, call the Sarasota County Health Department at 941-861-2813.

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