



## New Survey Shows that New Hampshire Voters Want to Expand Healthy Kids to Cover More Uninsured Children

March 5, 2007 – A new poll, sponsored by the New England Alliance for Children’s Health<sup>1</sup> and funded in part by the HNHfoundation, the Endowment for Health, and the National Association of Children’s Hospitals, was conducted by Lake Research Partners January 26 - February 8, 2007. The survey included 401 registered voters in New Hampshire, and was administered in all six New England states (reported elsewhere) for a total of 2,401 interviews.

The survey examines opinions about the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), called Healthy Kids in New Hampshire. SCHIP is a focus for the 110<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress and state legislatures this year. The original ten-year authorization for SCHIP expires in 2007, and a key issue will be how much funding is allocated for the program. While elected officials in Washington, DC debate about funding for SCHIP, New Hampshire voters are clear: *they want Healthy Kids expanded to cover more uninsured children.* Indeed, they support efforts to cover *all* uninsured children in their state.

These survey results reinforce research findings from other states across the country – that health care and affordable coverage is a top priority and concern among voters. During these times, it is not surprising that voters are unwilling to cut funding for a program that provides affordable coverage – especially for children – and instead want to *expand* health care coverage.

Key findings, a chart pack, and survey methodology can be found on the following pages.

<sup>1</sup> The New England Alliance for Children’s Health is a regional coalition of consumers, health care providers, business leaders, educators, interfaith organizations and advocacy groups working to ensure that all children have access to high quality healthcare.

# Children’s Health Coverage Survey

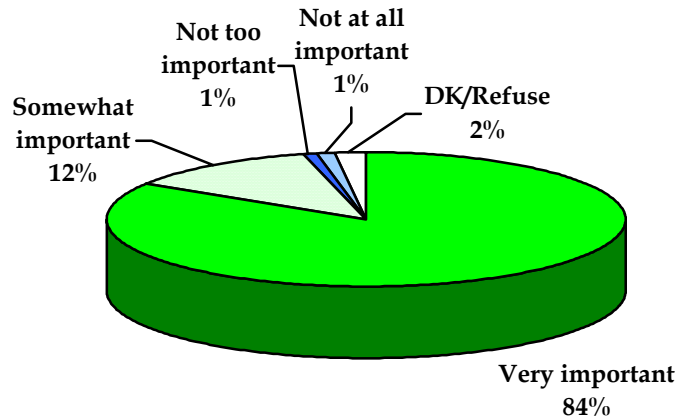


## Key Findings

- New Hampshire voters not only support Healthy Kids, the vast majority favors expanding it to cover all uninsured children in their state.** Nearly all voters (96%) say Healthy Kids is an important program, and 84% consider it a very important program. (See Figure 1) Nearly nine in ten (89%) favor expanding the program to cover all uninsured children in New Hampshire, and 72% feel this way strongly. This support crosses political parties, and large majorities of those with and without young children favor expanding the program. (See Figure 2)
- Voters in New Hampshire want to increase funding for Healthy Kids – at both federal and state levels.** Seven in ten (71%) voters want Congress to provide enough funding to expand SCHIP. (See Figure 3) Only six percent of these voters favor keeping funding at current levels, which would result in dropping children from the program. Voters feel similarly about state funding; 89% favor increasing state funds for Healthy Kids. (See Figure 4)
- Support for increasing funding stays strong even when the price tag is attached.** Eighty-four percent of New Hampshire voters favor Congress increasing funding by \$8 billion, even when they hear this would cost about \$28 per American. (See Figure 5)
- Voters reject the argument that there are other more important funding priorities, and they disagree that cutting taxes should take precedence over children’s health coverage.** Eight in ten voters reject both of these arguments, including majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats, as well as voters of all income levels. (See Figure 6)
- Voters support Healthy Kids because they believe strongly that all children should have the health care they need to grow and learn.** Nearly all voters (98%) believe this – 84% strongly. (See Figure 7) More than nine in ten (94%) voters also agree that investing more in Healthy Kids is particularly important with the trend of fewer employers providing coverage for workers and families.
- New Hampshire voters also support offering affordable coverage to the low-income parents of children enrolled in Healthy Kids, if the parent’s job does not offer health insurance.** Nine in ten (92%) favor this policy idea, with two thirds (67%) expressing strong support. (See Figure 8)
- A majority of voters also favors allowing all children to keep their coverage until age 25 if they cannot afford insurance or get it through their job – regardless of whether they have private coverage through their parents or Healthy Kids.** Seven in ten (71%) favor this idea, including majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats, as well as those with and without young children at home. (See Figure 9)

**Figure 1: Importance of Healthy Kids**

Q. In your opinion, do you think Healthy Kids is a very important program, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all an important program?



**Figure 2: Expand Healthy Kids to Cover All Uninsured Children**

Q. State elected officials will be discussing different ideas about Healthy Kids this year. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each of the following ideas: Expand the program so that every uninsured child in New Hampshire can get health care coverage.

	Favor (Total)	Strongly favor	Somewhat favor
<i>Total: All New Hampshire Voters</i>	89%	72%	17%
<b>Party ID</b>			
Democrats	97%	80%	17%
Independents	88%	71%	17%
Republicans	79%	59%	20%
<b>Parents of Children &lt;18</b>			
Children <18	94%	79%	15%
No Children <18	86%	67%	19%

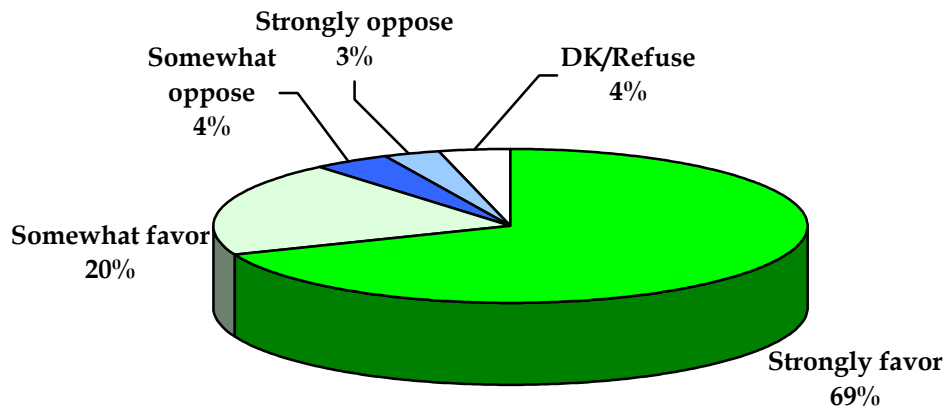
**Figure 3: Invest More Federal Funds in SCHIP**

Q. Healthy Kids gets much of its funding at the federal level. This year, the U.S. Congress must make decisions about the federal funding for this program. Which statement best describes your thoughts on what Congress should do:

A) Keep funding the program at the same level even though that will mean dropping children from the program because of the rising cost of health care.	6%
B) Put enough money into the program so it can continue to cover the same number of children as it does now.	21%
C) Put even more money into the program so that more of the nearly nine million uninsured children nationwide can get health coverage.	71%

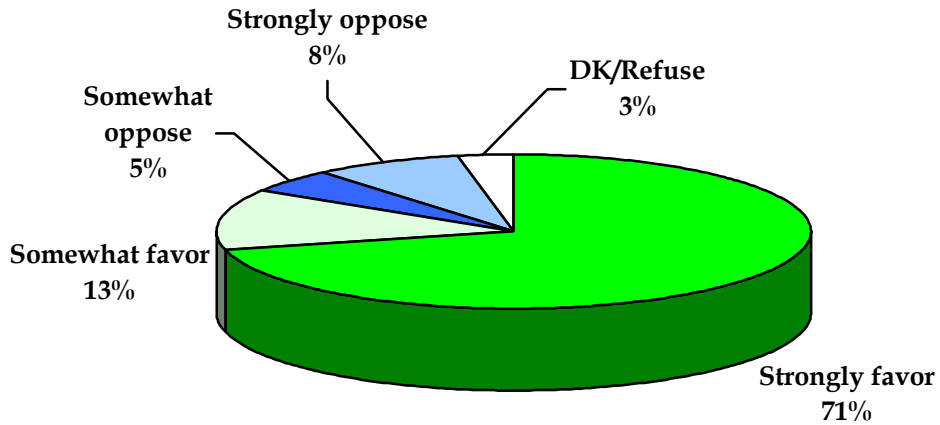
**Figure 4: Invest More State Funds in Healthy Kids**

Q. Now thinking about your state government, do you favor or oppose New Hampshire investing more in the Healthy Kids program so that it can cover more of New Hampshire's uninsured children? (Is that strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?)



**Figure 5: Increase SCHIP Funding By \$8 Billion -- \$28 Per American**

Q. Leading child health experts estimate that we could cut the number of low-income uninsured children in America in half if the US Congress invests 8 billion dollars more per year over the next five years. This would be about \$28 a year per American. Would you favor or oppose Congress increasing funding for Medicaid and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program by 8 billion dollars a year for the next 5 years? *Base N=201, split sample*



Voters' Attitudes Toward SCHIP

**Figure 6: Voters Reject Arguments About Other Priorities and Cutting Taxes**

Q. State elected officials will be discussing different ideas about Healthy Kids this year. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each of the following ideas: Cut back on the program so that funding can go toward other priorities. Q. I'd like to read reasons some people say we should not expand the program. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each reason for not expanding: Right now we need to focus on cutting taxes, not spending more on children's health coverage.

	<b>Cut Back on Healthy Kids for Other Priorities (% Total <u>Oppose</u>)</b>	<b>Focus Should Be On Cutting Taxes, Not Spending More on Children's Health Coverage (% Total <u>Disagree</u>)</b>
<i>All New Hampshire Voters</i>	81%	80%
<b>Party ID</b>		
Democrats	87%	90%
Independents	83%	77%
Republicans	78%	69%
<b>Household Income</b>		
Less than \$40K	73%	79%
\$40K to \$80K	88%	84%
\$80K or more	88%	86%

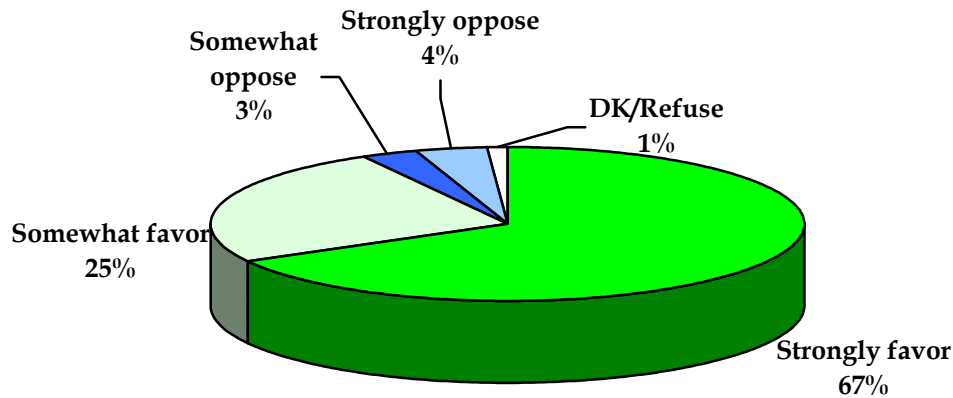
**Figure 7: Why Voters Want to Invest More in Healthy Kids**

Q. Here are some reasons people say we should invest more into the program. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following reasons to invest more in Healthy Kids.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>
All children should have the health care they need to grow and learn.	84%	14%
With fewer companies these days providing health coverage for their workers and their families, Healthy Kids is especially important for making sure that children in working families can keep getting the health services they need.	74%	20%

**Figure 8: Offer Affordable Coverage to Healthy Kids Parents**

Q. State elected officials will be discussing different ideas about Healthy Kids this year. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each of the following ideas: Allow low-income, working parents of the children enrolled in Healthy Kids to get affordable health coverage for themselves through the program, if their job does not offer health insurance.



**Figure 9: Allow All Children to Keep Coverage Until Age 25**

Q. Allow all children in the state, whether they have private coverage through their parents or Healthy Kids, to keep their coverage until age 25, if they can't afford insurance or their job does not provide it.

	Favor	Oppose
<b>Total: All New Hampshire Voters</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Party ID</b>		
Democrats	76%	18%
Independents	69%	26%
Republicans	65%	32%
<b>Parents of Children &lt;18</b>		
Children <18	75%	21%
No Children <18	68%	26%

Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey which was conducted by telephone using professional interviewers from January 26 through February 8, 2007. The survey was conducted among 2401 registered voters age 18 and older in all six New England states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. A total of 401 interviews were conducted in New Hampshire.

Telephone numbers for the survey were drawn from a random-digit-dial (RDD) sample in each state. The sample was executed in replicates, using a seven callback design. A screening question asked respondents if they were registered to vote at their current address. Only those who said “yes” were included in the survey. The data were weighted slightly by gender, age, and race to reflect their proper proportions according to the U.S. Census.

In interpreting survey results, all probability sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error; that is, the results of a survey may differ from those which would be obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of responses to a particular question. The margin of sampling error for the New Hampshire results is  $\pm 4.9$  percentage points. When looking at smaller subgroups within the sample, the margin of error will be greater. The table below represents the estimated sampling error for different percentage distributions of responses based on sample size.

**Margin of Sampling Error  
for Different Percentage Distributions and Different Sample Sizes  
(95% confidence)**

SAMPLE SIZE NEAR	PERCENTAGES NEAR								
	<u>10%</u>	<u>20%</u>	<u>30%</u>	<u>40%</u>	<u>50%</u>	<u>60%</u>	<u>70%</u>	<u>80%</u>	<u>90%</u>
1,000	1.9	2.5	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	2.5	1.9
800	2.1	2.8	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.2	2.8	2.1
600	2.4	3.2	3.7	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.2	2.4
400	2.9	3.9	4.5	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.5	3.9	2.9
200	4.2	5.5	6.4	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.4	5.5	4.2
100	5.9	7.8	9.0	9.6	9.7	9.6	9.0	7.8	5.9