

H&R Block Assists in Providing Health Insurance to Children

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KANSAS CITY, Mo., March 13 /PRNewswire/ -- With more than 10 million uninsured children in the United States, H&R Block (NYSE: HRB) this year has extended nationwide its partnership with the federal Health Resources and Services Administration to assist in providing health insurance coverage to low-income children.

"It is satisfying to us to be in a position to make a difference in so many lives," says Mark A. Ernst, president and chief executive officer of H&R Block.

The company is providing potentially eligible families across the country with printed information encouraging them to learn more about their State's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) by calling the toll-free hotline 1-877-KIDS NOW. The SCHIP public service announcements are printed prominently on the company's new "Just For You" form, which provides personal financial and tax advice for its U.S. clients. The company also is providing state-specific SCHIP information cards in all Kansas City, Mo., and St Louis and Nebraska offices.

"Thanks to this partnership with H&R Block, we will help more hard-working, low-income parents give their kids the kind of access to health care that many of us take for granted," said Claude Earl Fox, M.D., M.P.H., administrator of HRSA, the agency which supports the 1-877 KIDS Now hotline. "We will continue to work with states, communities and private organizations to reach America's uninsured children and provide them with the medical care they need to live healthy, happy and productive lives."

Fox also praised H&R Block for its leadership since 1999 in helping the nation's children through its support for SCHIP. Last year, H&R Block served nearly 17 million taxpayers with approximately 4 million clients having similar incomes to families whose children may be eligible for SCHIP.

In California, H&R Block has worked diligently since 1999 to promote the Healthy Families Program (California's name for SCHIP). In January 2001, the company received the prestigious Hammer Award, initiated in 1994 by then vice president Al Gore to recognize efforts that create innovative solutions to problems.

And in Missouri, H&R Block Chairman Frank L. Salizzoni helped spearhead the state's outreach initiative, known as MC+ for Kids (Missouri's name for CHIP).

"Many families truly believe they need extremely low incomes or be on welfare in order for their children to be eligible," says Tina M. Cheatham, HRSA's SCHIP Outreach Coordinator. "That's simply not true."

In Missouri, a family of four with a monthly income of \$4,262 would qualify for the program. Many families, however, remain unaware of the eligibility requirements. Six out of 10 parents whose uninsured children qualify for state children's health insurance programs or Medicaid believe they are not eligible, according to a report by Covering Kids, a program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

There are currently 3.3 million children enrolled in SCHIP.

About H&R Block

H&R Block Inc. is a diversified company with subsidiaries providing a wide range of financial products and services. In 2000, H&R Block served 19.2 million taxpayers -- more than any tax or accounting firm -- through its more than 10,000 offices located in the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. H&R Block served another 1.8 million tax clients through its award-winning software program, Kiplinger TaxCut(R), and through its new online tax preparation services. Investment services and securities products are offered through H&R Block Financial Advisors Inc., member NYSE, SIPC. H&R Block Inc. is not a registered broker-dealer. H&R Block Mortgage Corporation and Option One Mortgage Corporation offer a full range of home mortgage products. RSM McGladrey Inc. is a national accounting, tax and consulting firm with 100 offices nationwide, as well as an affiliation with 550 offices in 75 countries as the U.S. member of RSM International. Quarterly results and other information are available on the company's Web site at www.hrblock.com. SOURCE H&R Block Inc.

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