

H&R Block Joins With Covering Kids to Connect Uninsured Children With Low-Cost and Free Health Care Coverage

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KANSAS CITY, Mo., Feb 14, 2002 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- H&R Block (NYSE: HRB) has joined with Covering Kids, a national initiative of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, to inform families whose children do not have health insurance about affordable and available coverage through the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Medicaid.

Nationally, more than eight million children are uninsured. Most of these children are eligible for SCHIP or Medicaid but are not enrolled. These programs cover doctor's visits, immunizations, prescriptions, hospitalization, and other important services for children and teens and are available in all 50 states and the District of Columbia for most uninsured children.

"By joining forces with Covering Kids, H&R Block is in a unique position to expand our commitment to families with uninsured children and inform them about these programs," said Mark A. Ernst, president and chief executive officer of H&R Block. "With the downturn in the economy, information about available and affordable health care coverage for children is more important than ever. We see families in our tax offices across the country every day and many of these families may be eligible for low-cost or free health care coverage for their children but may not know it. We can serve as a critical link by identifying potentially eligible families and encouraging them to call the toll-free hotline number to see if they meet the eligibility requirements for their state."

H&R Block's partnership with Covering Kids builds on its commitment to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services to refer potentially eligible clients to the national toll-free 1(877) KIDS-NOW hotline. Since 1999, H&R Block has provided potentially eligible families in California, Missouri and other states with information about SCHIP and Medicaid. Through the Covering Kids partnership, H&R Block will now be able to expand its outreach efforts nationwide by promoting the availability of low-cost or free health care coverage on the company's personalized Just For You financial advice form. Clients who earn \$35,000/year or less and have children under the age of 19 will receive a special health care message and the toll-free 1 (877) KIDS-NOW number promoting low-cost and free health care coverage. Eligibility guidelines for SCHIP and Medicaid vary by state and are based on family size and income.

"Research shows that one in five parents of eligible-uninsured children were forced to delay or skip medical care for their children during the past year because they did not know how they would pay for it." said Sarah Shuptrine, Director of the Covering Kids National Program Office. "We need to let these families know about available health care coverage for their children. H&R Block's partnership with Covering Kids illustrates the important role the business community can play in efforts to reach families. In providing tax-preparation and other financial services to families, H&R Block's tax professionals are in an excellent position to make available important information about affordable health care coverage for children."

Covering Kids was established in 1997 by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to help states and local communities increase the number of eligible children who benefit from SCHIP and Medicaid. Covering Kids has coalitions in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and pilot projects in more than 170 communities nationwide. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is the largest foundation in the United States dedicated solely to the health and health care of all Americans. For more information about Covering Kids, visit www.coveringkids.org

About H&R Block

H&R Block, Inc., is a diversified company with subsidiaries providing a wide range of financial services and products. In 2001, H&R Block served 19.2 million taxpayers -- more than any tax or accounting firm -- through its more than 10,400 offices located in the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. H&R Block served another 2.3 million tax clients through its award-winning TaxCut(R) software program and its 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 wide range of home mortgage products. RSM McGladrey, Inc., is a national accounting, tax, and consulting firm with more than 100 offices nationwide, as well as an affiliation with 550 offices in 75 countries as the U.S. member of RSM International. Additional information is available on the company's Web site at www.hrblock.com.

About The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was established as a national philanthropy in 1972 and today is the largest U.S. foundation devoted to improving the health and health care of all Americans. The Foundation concentrates its grant making in four areas:

- To assure that all Americans have access to basic health care at reasonable cost;
- To improve care and support for people with chronic health conditions;
- To promote healthy communities and lifestyles; and
- To reduce the personal, social and economic harm caused by substance abuse - tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org

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