

September 9, 2004

**alberta works****More families qualify for free health benefits**

Edmonton... More families are now eligible for premium-free health benefits for their children through the Alberta Child Health Benefit because eligibility levels have been increased.

"This benefit has a positive impact on children's health and parents' workforce participation," said Clint Dunford, Minister of Alberta Human Resources and Employment. "More than 70,000 children are receiving health services, and increasing the qualifying levels will help us extend coverage to even more."

The Alberta Child Health Benefit provides children in low-income families with coverage for health, dental and optical care including new glasses, prescription drugs, emergency ambulance service and essential diabetic supplies. Eligibility is based on income and the number of children in the family. A one-child family will now qualify with income up to \$24,397, a level which is \$2,000 higher than last year. Exceptional circumstances, like substantial changes in the income of families with high ongoing health costs, will also be considered. Coverage is also being extended to 18 and 19 year olds who are living with their parents and attending high school.

Parents receiving the Alberta Child Health Benefit have said that it has a positive impact on children's health, and that they are much more likely to obtain health services for their children with this coverage than without it.

Information kits, including posters, information brochures and application are being mailed to health service providers across Alberta. The brochure gives information on how to calculate qualifying income.

More information is available by clicking on [www.gov.ab.ca/hre/achb](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/achb), by calling 1-877-4-MY-KIDS (1-877-469-5437, or 427-6848 in Edmonton), or by coming in to any Alberta Human Resources and Employment Service Centre.

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\*Note to editors: ACHB graphics can be downloaded from <http://www3.gov.ab.ca/hre/newsroom/>.

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