



Children's Health Initiative Success Story



The Alvarez Family Sacramento County

Irma Alvarez knows the meaning of a helping hand when it is most needed. In November of 2005, she assumed guardianship of her nephew and nieces when their parents were unable to care for them. In addition to her own two children, Irma and her husband were now the primary caregivers for Ulysses (age 14), Diana (8), Yolanda (6) and Cassandra (9 months old). She and her husband had to convert their family room into a large bedroom and buy bunk beds to accommodate their suddenly large family.

Moreover, Ulysses, Diana, Yolanda and Cassandra needed immediate medical and dental attention, but did not have health insurance. Irma and her husband were forced to pay out of pocket for their treatments, which included Ulysses' ingrown toenail, a rash on Diana's hands, Yolanda's dental pain and bringing Cassandra up to date on her first-year immunizations.

Later on, Irma learned from their children's school nurse that Ulysses, Diana, Yolanda and Cassandra might qualify for health insurance through Cover the Kids, Sacramento County's Children's Health Initiative. Irma completed an application for all four children, and was relieved when she received word that their Healthy Kids application had been approved.



Pictured (left to right): Certified Application Assistor Carmen Herrera with Irma Alvarez and her nieces, Cassandra, Yolanda and Diana

More than a year later, Ulysses, Diana, Yolanda and Cassandra still receive comprehensive health coverage through Healthy Kids, and Irma and her husband couldn't feel more blessed. All six of their children are happy, healthy and doing well in school.

When her nephew and nieces needed her most, Irma was there. Now Healthy Kids is there too.