



**LIRS**

LUTHERAN IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICE

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# Selected Issues Facing Immigrant Youth

# OVERVIEW

- Legal Issues
- Health Care Medical Insurance
- Education – DREAM Update
- Update on Comprehensive Immigration Reform

# **Special Legal Issues of Concern to Immigrant Youth**

- **Do they have legal immigration status?**
- **Reporting crimes, child abuse, or domestic violence to the police and other government agencies?**

# **Legal Immigration Benefits and Protections for Immigrant Youth**

**Family Visa Petition**

**Refugee and Asylum Status**

**Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)**

**Trafficking and Serious Crime Victims**

**Temporary Protected Status (TPS)**

**Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)**

**Citizenship (“acquired” and “derivative”)**

# Legal Resources for Immigrant Youth

**Local civil legal services agency**

**Local bar association**

**Catholic Charities or CLINIC**

## **Publications and Materials**

**Immigrant Legal Resource Center**

**[www.ilrc.org](http://www.ilrc.org)**

**National Center for Refugee & Immigrant  
Children**

**[www.refugees.org/nationalcenter](http://www.refugees.org/nationalcenter)**

# Health Insurance for Immigrant Children and Families

## The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)

Created in 1997, SCHIP is a federal program for families who earn too much money to qualify for Medicaid, yet cannot afford to buy private insurance.

## State Funded SCHIP and Medicaid Programs

About 20 States provide medical care to immigrants who are not eligible for coverage under SCHIP.

# Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act (ICHIA)

## What is ICHIA?

**ICHIA would allow states to provide medical coverage to lawfully-present immigrant children and pregnant women under Medicaid or State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) with no waiting period.**

# **Why is ICHIA needed?**

**Since 1996, most newly arrived, lawfully present immigrants are barred for 5 years from access to Medicaid and SCHIP.**

**Children of immigrants are 3x more likely than children of native-born citizens to lack regular health care.**

## **Current Status in Congress**

- **Bi-partisan support in House & Senate**
- **Support from Natl Conf State Legislatures & Natl Governors Assn.**
- **To be introduced with SCHIP re-authorization**

**How do I find out more  
about ICHIA?**

**The National Immigration Law  
Center**

**[www.nilc.org](http://www.nilc.org)**

# **DREAM Act**

## **What is the DREAM Act?**

**The DREAM Act addresses the situation of young people brought to the U.S. years ago as undocumented immigrant children who have since grown up, stayed in school, and now want to become full members of American society.**

# **DREAM Act**

What are the DREAM Act requirements?

**Student brought to the U.S. more than 5 years ago**

**When he/she was 15 years old or younger**

**Good moral character**

- A. 6 year “conditional status” upon graduation from high school**
- B. Obtain lawful permanent residency upon completion of:  
2-year college degree, or  
2 years of 4-year degree, or  
2 years in military**

# **Comprehensive Immigration Reform**

**What is comprehensive immigration reform?**

## **Key Components**

- **create legal avenues for people to enter U.S.**
- **allow people here to earn legal status;**
- **address backlogs in family and employment-based immigration;**
- **create a smart security and enforcement regime that respects human rights**



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