



For immediate release:  
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## **SCETV documentary “CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP” sheds light on the remarkable creation of the CHIP Program**

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** – The compelling SCETV documentary ***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP*** explores the journey behind the inception of one of the most vital children's health programs ever enacted—the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). The documentary premieres Jan. 18 at 8 p.m. on ETV-HD, and re-airs Jan. 20 at 10 p.m. on ETV World and Jan. 22 at 8 p.m. on South Carolina Channel.

In the early 1980s, the collapse of the steel industry had devastating consequences for Western Pennsylvania, resulting in the loss of 150,000 jobs and one of the nation's highest unemployment rates. Displaced steelworkers joined forces with church leaders in the hardest-hit areas of Pittsburgh. Their collective efforts led to protests at churches attended by bank and steel executives, including a nationally publicized event in 1984 when actor David Soul and others were arrested during a demonstration at Shadyside Presbyterian Church.

As tensions escalated, 40 demonstrators later gathered outside Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church, symbolically offering dead fish to parishioners as a protest. This act culminated in a pivotal moment when the group marched into the church, faced the congregation and pleaded for help. Among those in the pews was 16-year-old Scott Galloway, the future director of this documentary, whose father, the church's senior pastor, played a central role in this turning point. The protesters conveyed the urgent need for assistance for their struggling families, and their actions sparked a dialogue within the community.

During the 1980s, health insurance options for children were severely limited. COBRA insurance did not exist, and Medicaid only applied to families at half the poverty level. This resulted in countless children being left without medical care, which had cascading effects on their health and well-being, including hearing loss and decreased school attendance.

Out of these challenges emerged the grassroots *Caring Program*, initially created to provide healthcare to 100 children of working poor families. The initiative gained momentum as Fred Rogers, better known as Mister Rogers of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, joined as a spokesperson. What began as a modest effort soon expanded, with churches, schools, businesses and professional sports teams, such as the Pittsburgh Pirates and Steelers, rallying behind the cause. The *Caring Program* grew to encompass tens of thousands of children, spreading beyond Pennsylvania's borders to 25 other states.

Pennsylvania State Senator Allen Kukovich played a pivotal role in expanding the program statewide. After years of advocacy, he successfully secured funding by introducing a two-cent tax on a pack of cigarettes, resulting in the establishment of Pennsylvania Blue CHIP. In 1997, CHIP became a federal program, providing essential healthcare coverage to nearly 200 million children to date.

***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP*** was produced by Susie Films and is a national presentation by SCETV with distribution through PBS. Production funding was provided by the ETV Endowment of South Carolina, Highmark Health, The Pittsburgh Foundation, United Steelworkers and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation.

Distributed by PBS to public television stations across the US, ***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP*** will also be available for streaming on the PBS app, PBS Amazon Prime and on [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org). For more information about ***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP***, please visit [scetv.org](https://www.scetv.org).

#### QUOTES:

"The documentary ***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP*** shines a light on a pivotal moment in our nation's history when ordinary citizens came together to address an extraordinary challenge. It reminds us that real change is possible when individuals and communities unite with determination and compassion. We are proud to bring this important story to our viewers, showcasing the transformative impact of the Children's Health Insurance Program and the enduring power of the human spirit." –**SCETV President and CEO Adrienne Fairwell**

"Creating ***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP*** has been a deeply moving experience. This documentary pays tribute to the unwavering commitment of countless individuals who fought for the health and well-being of our nation's children. It is a testament to the resilience of communities facing adversity. Through this film, we hope to inspire and remind everyone that positive change is within our reach when we come together for a common purpose." –***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP* Executive Producer Don Godish**

"I sat in a church pew nearly 40 years ago on that seminal Sunday when my father welcomed protestors into a church service and we all learned the importance of listening. In the aftermath, I witnessed a community effort become a federal program as a cross-section of people overcame differences, created change and demonstrated the best of democracy's promises. I am honored and grateful to have had the opportunity to tell this important and timely story." –***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP* Director Scott Galloway**

#### FAST FACTS:

- ***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP*** explores the journey behind the inception of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- The documentary premieres Jan. 18 at 8 p.m. on ETV-HD, and re-airs Jan. 20 at 10 p.m. on ETV World and Jan. 22 at 8 p.m. on South Carolina Channel.
- In the early 1980s, the collapse of the steel industry had devastating consequences for Western Pennsylvania, resulting in the loss of 150,000 jobs and one of the nation's highest unemployment rates.
- ***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP*** was produced by Susie Films and is a national presentation by SCETV with distribution through PBS.
- Production funding for ***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP*** was provided by the ETV Endowment of South Carolina, The Pittsburgh Foundation, United Steelworkers, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation and Highmark Health.
- For more information about ***CHILDREN IN CRISIS: The Story of CHIP***, please visit [scetv.org](http://scetv.org).

#### About South Carolina ETV and Public Radio

South Carolina ETV and Public Radio (SCETV) is the state's public educational broadcasting network. SCETV amplifies South Carolina voices, provides educational experiences and strengthens communities, while working toward creating a stronger, more connected and informed South Carolina. In addition to airing local programs, such as *Carolina Classrooms*, *Making It Grow*, and *This Week in South Carolina*, SCETV also presents multiple programs to regional and national audiences, including *By The River*, *After Action*, *Reconnecting Roots*, *Reel South*, *Somewhere South*, *Yoga in Practice* and *How She Rolls*. In addition, SC Public Radio produces the national radio production, *Chamber Music from Spoleto Festival USA*.



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