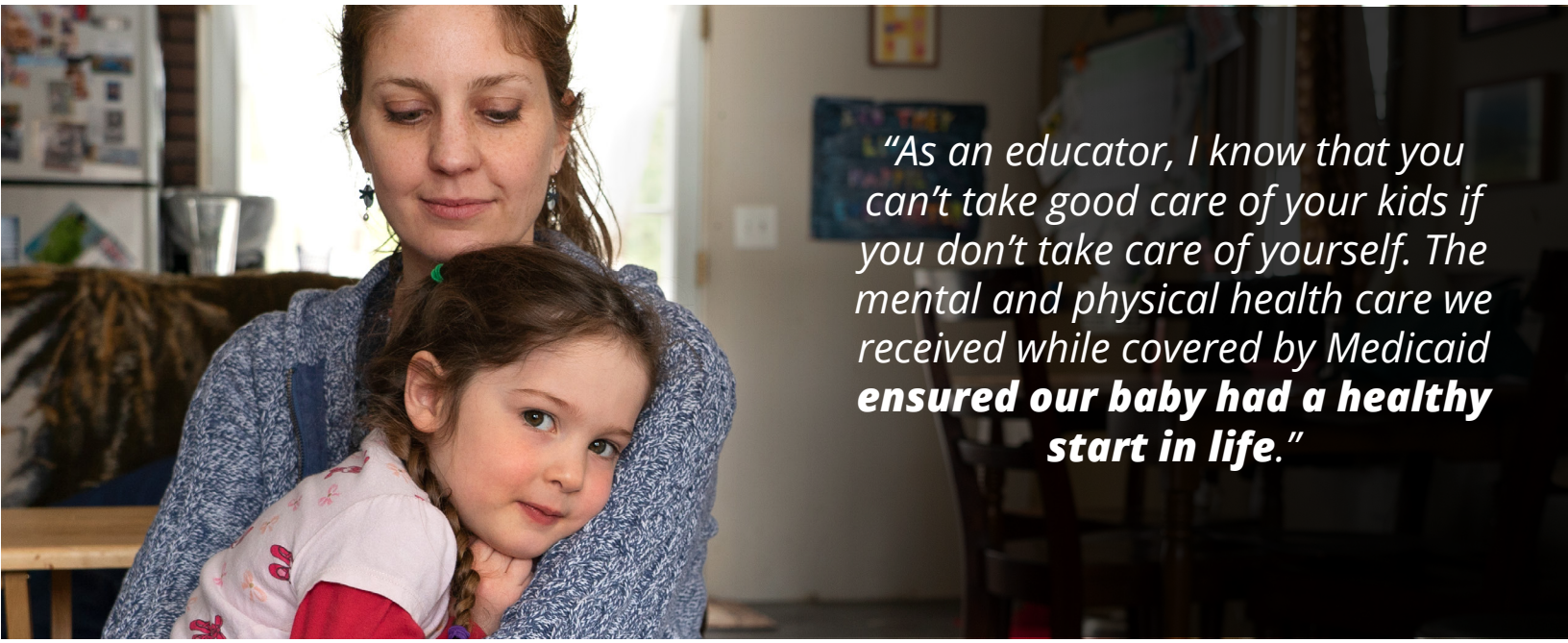
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

When A Family Grows

Jennifer and Jerry H. - Fletcher, Vermont



That's Medicaid *shares stories of people covered by Medicaid at critical points in their lives, underscoring the importance of stable health insurance coverage in building a Culture of Health.*

As the director of education at a family community center, **Jennifer H.** interacts with families covered by Medicaid all the time. Although she and her husband Jerry both earned modest incomes, she never thought a couple with two fulltime jobs would be eligible for the program.

But when Jennifer became pregnant with her daughter, she discovered the family qualified for the state's Medicaid program.

An earlier pregnancy ended in a stillbirth, so Jennifer was extremely stressed while pregnant. She was diagnosed with anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and extended postpartum depression. Being on Medicaid while pregnant enabled her to access important services without sacrificing other necessities.

Her daughter remained covered by Medicaid for her first two years, when Jennifer and Jerry both earned raises that enabled the whole family to afford private insurance.

Jennifer says the mental and behavioral health care that Medicaid covered while pregnant, and for 60 days after giving birth, gave her and her family a healthy start.