



News Release

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Immunization update time for kids is now -- beat the back-to-school rush

OLYMPIA — While kids across Washington are squeezing every ounce of fun out of summer, many parents are already looking forward to the beginning of the school year and planning for all that must be done before the first day of school.

Now is the time to get kids in to see their health care providers for required immunizations, yearly well-child checks, and sports physicals. Families can cut down on back-to-school stress by getting the right immunizations for their students well before school starts. Students who aren't in compliance with required vaccines may be kept out of school if a disease epidemic occurs.

"Now is the time to make sure you and your kids are fully vaccinated," said State Health Officer Dr. Kathy Lofy. "Immunizations are the best tool we have to protect students from serious diseases that can spread quickly through schools."

Parents can find the immunization requirements to [start school](#) and [attend child care online](#). There are new [changes to the requirements](#) this year for the chicken pox vaccine. It's also important that kids are current on their whooping cough shots. The disease is spreading in Washington and everyone can play a part in stopping it.

Due to the recent outbreak of whooping cough cases, State Communicable Disease Epidemiologist Dr. Scott Lindquist reiterated the importance of getting kids vaccinated against the preventable disease. "Whooping cough can be very dangerous for babies and young children. When school starts, whooping cough can spread easily from the classroom to the home. Making sure that all kids and pregnant moms are up to date with the right shots to prevent whooping cough can protect babies and families."

Back-to-School Immunizations

July 17, 2015

Page 2

No-cost vaccines are available for all kids up to age 19 through health care providers taking part in the state's Childhood Vaccine Program. Participating providers may charge for the office visit and an administration fee to give the vaccine. People who can't afford the administration fee can ask for it to be waived.

For help finding a health care provider or an immunization clinic, call your [local health agency](#) or the [WithinReach](#) Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588.

The [Department of Health website](#) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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