

NEWS RELEASE

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North Dakota Kindergarten Vaccination Rates Continue to Increase

BISMARCK, N.D. – Data from the 2017-2018 school immunization assessment shows that North Dakota’s kindergarten immunization rates have remained at about 94 percent for all required vaccines. In the last two years, rates have increased dramatically after spending previous years at or below 90 percent. The school immunization assessment is conducted annually by the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH).

“Outbreaks still occur in the United States due to pockets of low vaccination rates and the ease of travel,” said Lexie Barber, epidemiologist with the NDDoH. “That’s why immunizations are so important. For example, an MMR, or measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine coverage rate of 95 percent is recommended to maintain herd immunity in schools and prevent outbreaks of diseases such as measles. That’s why 95 percent is our goal.”

Before entering school in North Dakota, children must have five doses of DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis), four doses of IPV (polio), three doses of HBV (hepatitis B), two doses of MMR, and two doses of varicella (chickenpox) vaccine. With the 2018-2019 school year, students entering seventh through twelfth grade will need one dose of Tdap, which protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. Students in grades seventh through tenth will need one dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) and students entering eleventh and twelfth grades will need two doses of MCV4.

Children can be vaccinated at local public health units or private health care providers. For the 2018-2019 school year, students must be up-to-date with their vaccinations by October 1 or be excluded. Parents of children who will be attending school this fall are encouraged to make appointments now, not wait until the last minute to get their child vaccinated. For more information on school immunization requirements, contact Lexie Barber, NDDoH, at 701.328.2335, or visit www.ndhealth.gov/immunize.

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