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North Dakota's 2018-2019 Kindergarten Vaccination Rates Remain Level

BISMARCK, N.D. – Data from the 2018-2019 school immunization assessment indicates that North Dakota's kindergarten immunization rates remain similar to the previous year. The school immunization assessment is conducted annually by the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH).

Thanks to the hard work of North Dakota schools, health care providers, local public health units, North Dakota State University, the NDDoH, and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, school immunization rates have been increasing for the last few years. This year, rates did not increase, but remained around 94 percent. Exact rates and county breakdowns can be found on the NDDoH Immunization [website](#).

The percent of North Dakota parents claiming an exemption due to reasons of personal belief increased from 3.1 percent to 3.9 percent. Approximately 400 students are exempt from immunizations due to a parental personal belief. "Increasing exemption rates leave North Dakota schools vulnerable to outbreaks caused by vaccine preventable diseases, such as measles, mumps, or pertussis," said Jenny Galbraith, epidemiologist with the NDDoH. "An MMR coverage rate of 95 percent is recommended to maintain herd immunity in schools and prevent cases and outbreaks. Outbreaks have become more commonplace in the United States due to low vaccination rates and the ease of travel."

Before entering school in North Dakota, children must have five doses of DTaP, four doses of IPV (polio), three doses of HBV (hepatitis B), two doses of MMR, and two doses of varicella vaccine. Students entering seventh through twelfth grade need one dose of Tdap, which protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap). Students in grades 7 through 10 need one dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) and students entering grades 11 and 12 need a second dose of MCV4.

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Children can be vaccinated at local public health units or private health care providers. The exclusion date for students not compliant with requirements is October 1. Parents of children who will be attending school this fall are encouraged to make an appointment now to have their child vaccinated.

For more information on school immunization requirements, contact Jenny Galbraith, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2335, or visit the website at www.ndhealth.gov/immunize.

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