

Immunization E-Message: General Audience

Getting Ready for Back to School? Add Immunizations to Your Checklist

A new school year will be here soon. Parents and guardians registering children for school need to make sure children are up-to-date on their immunizations.

Missouri law requires that children in kindergarten through 12th grade receive immunizations to protect against vaccine-preventable diseases. This helps protect everyone – children, teachers, staff and the community as a whole.

A child's immunization record must be presented at school. State regulation specifies that an individual cannot attend until all required immunizations are current.

Children attending kindergarten through 12th grade are required to have the following immunizations or boosters against:

- DTaP – Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis or DT – diphtheria and tetanus;
- Tdap – Pertussis (8th, 9th, 10th and 11th grade);
- IPV – Polio;
- Hepatitis B;
- MMR – Measles, mumps, rubella; and
- Varicella – Chickenpox.

Getting your child immunized can be easy and inexpensive. For families with health insurance, all vaccines are usually covered. Children age 18 and younger may be eligible to get vaccines free through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program if they are Medicaid eligible, do not have health insurance, underinsured or are an American Indian or Alaskan Native. Doctors can charge a fee to give each shot. However, VFC vaccines cannot be denied to an eligible child if the family cannot afford the fee.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' *Back to School* campaign resources are available to help remind parents/guardians to get children immunized before school starts.

These resources include a bookmark, reminder postcards (both hardcopy and ecards), fact sheets and information on the Vaccines for Children program. They are available at no cost and can be ordered at health.mo.gov/immunizations or by calling 573.751.6124.

