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School Exclusion Day is Feb. 20

Parents must provide schools and child care facilities with children's immunization records

The Oregon Immunization Program wants parents to know that children will not be able to attend school or child care starting Feb. 20 if their records on file show missing immunizations.

State law requires that all children in public and private schools, preschools, Head Start and certified child care facilities have up-to-date documentation on their immunizations, or have a religious or medical exemption.

"Immunization is an effective way to keep schools and the entire community healthy. We want to make sure children are fully protected against vaccine-preventable diseases such as whooping cough," said Stacy de Assis Matthews, school law coordinator in the Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Division. "If school and child care vaccination records are not up to date, the child will be sent home."

Information for parents about updated vaccine requirements:

- Adolescents – seventh- through 11th-graders – require one dose of Tdap vaccine. Tdap is a tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough) booster.
- Children 18 months and older in child care, preschool and kindergarten through fourth grade require a two-dose series of the hepatitis A vaccine, which protects against a communicable viral infection.

(more)

In 2012, local health departments sent nearly 35,000 letters to parents and guardians informing them their children needed immunizations to stay in school or child care. About 4,600 children were kept out of school or child care until the necessary immunization information was turned in to the schools or child care facilities.

Parents seeking immunizations for their children should contact their health care provider or local health department, or call Oregon SafeNet at 1-800-SAFENET (1-800-723-3638) or 211. No one can be turned away from a local health department because of the inability to pay for required vaccines. Pharmacists can immunize children age 11 and older. Parents should contact their neighborhood pharmacy for details.

Additional information on school immunizations can be found at the [Immunization Program website](#). Follow the Oregon Immunization Program on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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