



# News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## **Back to School Preparations Include Vaccinating Children**

SACRAMENTO – With students preparing to head back to school, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) urges parents and guardians to check the vaccine record of their children. Many vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles, can easily spread in child care and school settings.

“By getting children all of the vaccines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), parents can protect their children from serious diseases,” said Dr. Karen Smith, CDPH Director and State Public Health Officer. “If you haven’t done so already, check with your child’s doctor to find out what vaccines your child needs before going back to school.”

When children are not vaccinated, they are at increased risk for getting sick and spreading diseases to students in their classrooms, and children and adults within their communities. Babies who are too young to be fully vaccinated, and people with weakened immune systems due to cancer or other health conditions are especially susceptible.

California law requires students to receive certain immunizations in order to attend public and private elementary and secondary schools as well as licensed child care centers. Schools and licensed child care centers are required to enforce immunization requirements, maintain immunization records of all children enrolled, and report student immunization status to CDPH.

Last April, CDPH reported encouraging results from the [annual immunization assessment](#) of children attending kindergarten in California in the 2016-17 school year. The report found that vaccination rates are at record levels: compared to 2015-16 results, the percentage of students attending kindergarten in 2016-17 who had received all required vaccines rose from 93 percent to 96 percent.

“Let’s keep raising our immunization rates in schools and daycares to keep our children healthy and in the classroom,” said Dr. Smith.

To learn more about the vaccination rate of your child's school or childcare is, go to the [Shots for School](#) website, scroll down to the left bottom of the page and click on the "How many students in your school have required shots?" banner. Enter the name of your child's school or daycare in the online tool.

Visit [Shots for School](#) for more information on immunizations for school children in California.

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