



Connie Beck, Director
Social Services | Public Health | Mental Health

news release

July 17, 2018

Schedule your back-to-school vaccines

The start of the new school year may feel far away, but it's not too early to schedule an appointment for back-to-school vaccines.

In 2016, a state mandate went into effect that requires all children entering transitional kindergarten, kindergarten and seventh grade be vaccinated, or in the process of being vaccinated, against measles, mumps, whooping cough and other diseases.

Children in child care settings must also be immunized. In the rare instance when a child has a compromised immune system, that child's physician can provide a medical exemption.

During the 2016-17 school year, the prevalence of fully vaccinated Humboldt County kindergarteners increased 5 percent from the year before, and the upward trend continued during the 2017-18 school year, increasing 2 percent from the previous year.

"Vaccines provide protection from serious diseases that can be spread throughout the classroom and the community—including to babies who are too young to be fully vaccinated, and people with weakened immune systems due to cancer and other health conditions," said Michele Stephens, director of Public Health for the Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services.

Stephens said most serious and potentially life-threatening diseases, like measles and polio, are rare in the United States because of childhood vaccines. However, many still exist here and abroad. "These diseases can make children very sick, leading to missed school, missed work for parents and even hospitalization. Protecting our children against vaccine-preventable diseases is a precaution every parent can take."

Vaccines are available from clinics and other local health care providers. For more information about immunizations, contact the Public Health Clinic at 707-268-2108. Parents can find out more about the recommended immunization schedule at www.shotsforschool.org.

-# # #-

Follow us on Twitter: @HumCoDHHS and
Facebook: www.facebook.com/humcodhhs