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**DATE:** June 5, 2009

**TO:** County Health Department Directors/Administrators

**FROM:** Jean L. Kline, R.N., B.S.N., M.P.H.  
Deputy Secretary for Health

**SUBJECT:** Florida Childcare and Head Start Facilities Immunization Assessment  
2008-2009

### **INFORMATION ONLY**

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In March 2009, the Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Immunization (BOI) completed the annual survey of immunization levels of randomly selected childcare and Head Start facilities located throughout the state. The BOI field staff visited a total of 129 licensed childcare facilities and 140 Head Start facilities from October 2, 2008 to March 1, 2009. The department conducted this assessment to evaluate the immunization status of preschool children in accordance with the schedule recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the United States Public Health Service and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

#### **Survey Purposes**

- To obtain a statewide representation of immunization levels in childcare populations in relation to the state and national goal of 90% coverage
- To determine the percentage of preschool children attending these facilities who are age-appropriately immunized
- To determine the level of compliance with immunization regulations at childcare and Head Start facilities
- To identify children with adequate immunization levels who have expired certificates or lack proper documentation of immunizations

#### **Survey Results**

Table 1 in the enclosure indicates vaccine-specific levels for both Head Start and childcare facilities.

##### **Head Start Facilities:**

There were 140 Head Start facilities randomly selected statewide. In those facilities, BOI field staff reviewed 1,518 randomly selected records, which included 124 children under 19 months of age and 1,394 children 19 months of age and older (maximum of 20 records per facility).

The results indicate that 98.1%, or 1,368 children 19 months and older, were adequately immunized with 4 DTaP, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, appropriate Hib, 1 Varicella, and 1 Pneumococcal Conjugate (PCV) vaccination.

**Childcare Facilities:**

There were 129 childcare facilities randomly selected statewide. In those facilities, BOI field staff reviewed 1,833 randomly selected records, which included 553 children under 19 months of age and 1,280 children 19 months of age and older (maximum of 20 records per facility).

Analysis of this data indicates that 94.8%, or 1,214 children 19 months and older, were adequately immunized with 4 DTaP, 3 Polio, 1 MMR, appropriate Hib, 1 Varicella, and 1 PCV vaccination.

Since many of the children less than 19 months of age were too young to have completed this immunization series, these results were reported separately (See Table 2).

**Concerns**

The assessment shows that 7.4% of children less than 19 months old who attend childcare facilities are past due for an immunization. These children, as well as those with temporary medical exemptions, are not adequately protected against vaccine-preventable diseases. The Department of Children and Families' District Child Care Licensing Specialists and county health department staff should work closely with childcare facilities to ensure these facilities maintain an adequate follow-up or tracking method for children who have incomplete immunizations. Agencies responsible for licensing childcare facilities must diligently ensure compliance with immunization requirements listed in Rule 65C-22.006, Florida Administrative Code, Child Care Standards. Children must be age-appropriately immunized, with proper documentation supporting the child's current immunization status.

The BOI thanks Head Start officials, childcare licensing specialists, and participating childcare and county health department staff for their assistance with this assessment. Each of us plays an integral role in the continuing mission to protect Florida's families and visitors from vaccine-preventable diseases.

JLK/cha/aw  
Enclosure

cc: Deborah Russo, Director of Child Care Services  
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cc: (continued)

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Table 1

**IMMUNIZATION LEVELS OF CHILDREN ≥ 19 MONTHS OLD  
IN CHILDCARE AND HEAD START FACILITIES, BY PERCENT  
FLORIDA, 2008-2009**

	HEADSTART FACILITIES			CHILDCARE FACILITIES		
Number Records Reviewed	1,394			1,280		
Percent Fully Immunized	98.1	±	0.7	94.8	±	1.2
Percent Proper Documentation	94.3	±	1.2	93.0	±	1.4
Percent Temporary Exemption	1.6	±	0.7	2.2	±	0
Percent Permanent Medical Exemption	0.1	±	0.2	0.2	±	0.2
Percent Religious Exemption	0.3	±	0.3	0.2	±	0.3
Percent 30-Day Exemption	0.1	±	0.1	0.1	±	0.2
Percent 4+ DTaP	99.2	±	0.5	98.0	±	0.8
Percent 3+ Polio	99.6	±	0.3	98.8	±	0.6
Percent MMR	96.8	±	0.9	95.2	±	1.2
Percent Hib	99.5	±	0.4	97.6	±	0.8
Percent Varicella	99.6	±	0.3	98.4	±	0.7
Percent Pneumococcal Conjugate	98.9	±	0.6	97.0	±	0.9

Table 2

**IMMUNIZATION LEVELS OF CHILDREN < 19 MONTHS OLD  
IN CHILDCARE FACILITIES, BY PERCENT  
FLORIDA, 2008-2009**

Number Records Reviewed	553		
Percent Not Due Immunizations	86.1	±	2.9
Percent Past Due	7.4	±	2.2
Percent With No Form; Enrolled < 30 Days; and Religious Exempt or Permanent Medical Exempt	6.7	±	2.1

There were too few children less than 19 months old in Head Start facilities for valid percentages.