



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 20, 2012

TO: County Health Department Directors/Administrators

FROM: Steven L. Harris, M.D., M.Sc.
Deputy Secretary for Health

SUBJECT: Kindergarten and Seventh Grade Immunization Status Report 2011-2012

FOR INFORMATION ONLY (Signature on file)

Each October, all public and private schools with a kindergarten and/or seventh grade class are required to submit reports indicating the immunization status of their kindergarten and/or seventh grade students. This information is compiled and sent to the Bureau of Immunization for tabulation. Enclosures 1 through 4 are summaries of kindergarten data, and enclosures 5 through 8 are summaries of seventh grade data for the 2011-2012 school year. This information reflects immunization coverage for 225,532 kindergarten students and 225,378 seventh grade students.

Purpose:

- To decrease the occurrence of vaccine-preventable diseases by increasing immunization coverage levels among school-age children.
- To ensure the enforcement of Chapter 64D-3.046, *Florida Administrative Code*, and of section 1003.22, *Florida Statutes, Florida School Immunization Law*, regarding immunization. The law states students are not permitted to attend school without proper documentation. Schools permitting said students are in violation of the state law, and said students should be excluded from school until adequate documentation is provided.
- To identify those counties needing assistance in raising their immunization coverage levels in kindergarten and seventh grade to Florida's goal of 95%. The national goal for kindergarten and seventh grade is 95% and 90%, respectively.

Results – Kindergarten:

Statewide, 92.6% of kindergarten students were reported as receiving all immunizations (listed below) required for school entry/attendance:

- Four or five doses of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTaP) vaccine
- Three, four, or five doses of polio vaccine
- Two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine
- Three doses of hepatitis B vaccine
- Two doses of varicella vaccine

Of Florida's 67 counties, 33, or 49.3%, achieved or exceeded the goal of 95% or more of kindergarten students receiving all required immunizations upon school entry/attendance. Statewide, 415 students, or 0.2%, had inadequate immunizations and/or documentation of immunizations. Students with exemptions from immunization accounted for 7.2% of the total kindergarten population, as reflected below:

- 9,758 temporary medical exemptions, or 4.3%
- 724 permanent medical exemptions, or 0.3%
- 2,771 religious exemptions, or 1.2%
- 3,098 30-day exemptions, or 1.4%

Results – Seventh Grade:

Statewide, 95.4% of seventh grade students were reported as receiving all immunizations required for school entry/attendance, including but not limited to:

- Completion of the hepatitis B series
- Two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella (preferably as MMR)
- One dose of varicella
- One dose of tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap)

Sixty-six of 67 counties, or 98.5%, achieved or exceeded the national goal of 90% or more of seventh grade students receiving all required immunizations. Sixty-one counties, or 91%, achieved or exceeded the state goal of 95%. Statewide, 1,473 students, or 0.7%, had inadequate immunizations and/or documentation of immunizations. Students with exemptions from immunization accounted for 4% of the total seventh grade population, as reflected below:

- 5,837 temporary medical exemptions, or 2.6%
- 622 permanent medical exemptions, or 0.3%
- 1,738 religious exemptions, or 0.8%
- 783 30-day exemptions, or 0.3%

Since Florida began tracking the immunization status of seventh grade students, this is the first year the 95% goal was achieved. For both kindergarten and seventh grade, the percentage of temporary medical exemptions decreased from the previous school year, which accounts for the higher rates of those receiving all immunizations required for school entry/attendance.

It is important to remember 30-day exemptions should be issued to transfer students only. Inadequately immunized, non-transfer students should be permitted school entry or attendance only after presenting proper documentation of vaccination. The school health nurse or authorized school official is responsible for follow-up of children with temporary medical and 30-day exemptions, and ensuring children complete the immunization series.

Collaboration between the school's health nurse and administration to update electronic submission of immunization data is encouraged. Using a reminder system to recall students in need of immunizations has shown to increase completion of the hepatitis B series, and has aided in the monitoring of Tdap.

County Health Department Directors/Administrators
Page Three
January 20, 2012

The Bureau of Immunization supports your local efforts to improve immunization coverage and is available to assist in reducing the threat of vaccine-preventable diseases to our children. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this report, you may contact our survey and assessment consultant, Ms. Amy Wilson, at (850) 245-4342, extension 2395.

SLH/cha/aw
Enclosures

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