



# News Release

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## **Time for back-to-school immunizations**

**OLYMPIA** – The Washington State Department of Health is urging parents to make sure their kids’ immunizations are up-to-date before heading back to school this fall.

“Summer is a busy time, and immunizations are often overlooked. Vaccines are critical protection for our children and help keep other kids around them safe from many diseases such as whooping cough and measles,” said State Health Officer Dr. Kathy Lofy.

Last school year, 85 percent of kindergartners had all their required immunizations. However, the number of kids with exemptions from recommended immunizations remained steady at 4.5 percent. This means that nearly 4,000 kindergartners do not have all of the vaccines they need to protect them from diseases.

A complete list of immunization requirements is available at the following Web pages:

- [Kindergarten through 12th-grade.](#)
- [Child care and preschool children.](#)

For school year 2016-2017, there are changes to the [chickenpox vaccine](#) requirement. Kids in kindergarten through grade 12 must get two doses of the vaccine or have a health care provider document that they have already had chickenpox.

Parents are encouraged to register for [MyIR](#), which allows access to their child’s [Certificate of Immunization Status](#). The [Childhood Vaccine Program](#) provides vaccines at no cost to kids younger than 19. Parents should be aware that health care providers might charge an office visit fee.

For help finding a health care provider or an immunization clinic, contact your [local health agency](#) or the [WithinReach](#) Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588.

The department’s [website](#) is your source for a *healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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