



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **North Dakota Department of Health Reminds Parents That Now is the Time to Think About Back-to-School Immunizations**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health is encouraging parents to get their children vaccinated now to avoid the back-to-school rush later this summer.

Children entering school should have five doses of DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis), four doses of IPV (polio), two doses of MMR (measles, mumps and rubella), and two doses of varicella (chickenpox) vaccine. There also are vaccines that are required for adolescents when entering middle school. Middle school requirements include an immunization against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap) and meningococcal disease. The vaccine that protects against meningococcal disease also is recommended for freshmen attending college. Other vaccines may be recommended by children’s health-care providers.

The school requirements reflect immunization recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Approximately one-third of middle school students were not up-to-date with Tdap and meningococcal vaccine during the 2010-2011 school year.

“By requiring vaccines, we hope to minimize the spread of preventable illnesses in schools and provide North Dakota’s children with a healthier environment to learn,” said Abbi Pierce, Immunization Surveillance coordinator. “Children should get vaccinated as soon as possible to ensure they are protected before the first day of school.”

Children can be vaccinated at local public health units or your private health-care provider. For more information on school immunization requirements, contact Abbi Pierce, North Dakota Department of Health, at 1.800.472.2180, or visit our website at [www.ndhealth.gov/immunize](http://www.ndhealth.gov/immunize).

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