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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN DUVAL REMINDS RESIDENTS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF BACK TO SCHOOL VACCINATIONS



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Jacksonville, Florida — As the new school year begins, the Florida Department of Health in Duval encourages parents to have their children immunized. Local county health departments statewide are providing free immunization services for eligible children who are entering school for the first time and those who are returning to class. Parents of kindergartners and 7th graders are encouraged to review their child's immunization record to be certain they are ready for school. New college students are also encouraged to ensure their immunizations are up to date.

“Vaccines are safe, effective and necessary to prevent harmful illnesses”: said Dr. Kelli Wells, Deputy Secretary for the Florida Department of Health and Director of the Department of Health in Duval County.

Vaccines help develop immunity to many serious infectious diseases by enabling the body to fight vaccine-preventable diseases. The following vaccines are required for children entering preschool and grades K-12: diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), measles, mumps, rubella, polio, varicella (chickenpox) and hepatitis B. Students entering college should check with health services at their college regarding immunization requirements. Children may be excluded from school if they are not up to date on their vaccinations.

The Florida Department of Health in Duval wants to ensure that our children are protected from diseases which can cause long term health effects and missed days from school. We want every child to have an opportunity to start school on day 1 and finish the school year without interference from a vaccine-preventable disease.

[Florida SHOTS](#) is a free, statewide, centralized online immunization registry that helps health care providers, parents, and schools keep track of immunization records to ensure that patients of all ages receive the vaccinations needed to protect them from dangerous vaccine-preventable diseases. Florida SHOTS makes it easier to keep up with your child's immunization history—even when moving or switching doctors within the state of Florida. The registry is endorsed by the Florida Academy of Family Physicians, Florida Association of Health Plans, Inc., Florida Medical Association, Florida Osteopathic Medical Association, and the Florida Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics.

If your child is due for a vaccine, please visit your family health care provider or one of our health department clinics. Visit [ImmunizeFlorida.org](https://immunizeflorida.org) to learn more about immunizations your child may need or call your local county health department at, 904.253.1420, to find out locations and times for immunization services available near you.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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