U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
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Help Kids' Safe Return to School - Get Caught Up on Recommended Vaccines

COVID-19 disrupted both in-person learning and routine well-child visits for many children over the last year. As a result, too many children have fallen behind on receiving recommended vaccines[1]. We all want our kids to be back in school safely, and that means getting caught up on vaccines that were missed over the last year. CDC's public sector vaccine ordering data show a 14% drop in 2020-2021 compared to 2019, and measles vaccine is down by more than 20%. Kids need to get caught up now so that they are protected as they go back to in-person learning. Catch-up vaccination will require efforts from healthcare systems, health care providers, schools, state and local governments, and families.

Healthcare systems and healthcare providers should:

- Identify families whose children have missed doses and contact them to schedule appointments
- Prompt clinicians when these children are seen to deliver vaccines that are due or overdue
- Let families know what precautions are in place for safe delivery of in-person services

Healthcare provider organizations should:

- Encourage members to identify and follow up with families whose children have missed doses to get appointments scheduled

Schools and state and local governments agencies should:

- Send reminders to families about school immunization requirements
- Follow-up with families of children who are not in compliance with requirements to encourage compliance
- Use the state's immunization information system's reminder-recall capacity to notify families whose children have fallen behind on vaccines

We all should:

- Communicate directly to families the importance of well-child visits and getting caught up on any recommended vaccines that were missed

Help us protect children by doing what you can to get kids caught up on recommended vaccines.

Sincerely,

Nancy Messonnier, MD
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[1] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. General Best Practice Guidelines for Immunization: Vaccination Programs. ACIP Vaccination Programs Guidelines for Immunization | Recommendations | CDC. Accessed March 21, 2021.