

IMMUNIZATIONS

OVERVIEW

Whenever children are gathered together in group settings there is potential for spread of dangerous diseases. To protect children from vaccine preventable communicable diseases, there are nationally recommended immunization schedules published by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), the Committee on Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP). These schedules recommend the number and intervals of vaccines for maximum protection. To protect children in schools from vaccine preventable disease, every state has immunization requirements for school attendance which follow one of the “recommended schedules” but may also use a “minimum schedule” for school attendance. Immunization law, rules and regulations for school attendance may change frequently.

School nurses play a key role in planning and coordinating school immunization programs in accordance with state immunization law for collection and evaluation of data, notification of need for vaccinations, maintaining immunization records on all children enrolled, and submitting reports to the state. Additionally, with current campaigns to adequately immunize all children, the school nurse is likely to become more involved than just notifying parents if a child is not in compliance with state law.

In California, the school nurse also serves as a resource to families regarding community agencies where immunizations may be obtained, and for information about immunization benefits, risks, and reactions. As an advocate for accessible immunization services for children, the school nurse may collaborate with community health agency staff and physicians and participate in community coalitions. The school nurse may also establish immunization clinic services at school, in accordance with California Code of Regulations and local district policy. The school nurse may also establish training, supervision and reporting procedures for school paraprofessionals to assist in implementing the school program. The nurse has a responsibility to maintain knowledge of existing state regulations, district procedures, and reporting forms. In cooperation with administration, the nurse plays a key role in making necessary revisions to policy and procedures to reflect current state requirements, including a clear, well-defined school exclusion policy for non-compliance with immunization regulations, as directed by state law.

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION LAW

When is the law applied?

California school immunization law requires that children receive a series of immunizations before entry into schools or child care programs.

The California Department of Public Health Services, Immunization Branch, publishes *The California Immunization Handbook* (The currently available 2003 version is in the process of being revised to reflect the new pertussis vaccine requirements (2011). The Handbook provides guidelines on record keeping and procedures related to disease reporting.

The California School Immunization Record

In California, the blue California School Immunization Record is the record schools and child care providers must complete and keep on file for each child. This record may be referred to by its initials (CSIR), its number (PM-286), or its color ("Blue Card"). Blue cards are available free of charge from local health departments.

San Diego Immunization Registry (SDIR)– California Immunization Registry (CAIR)

Most districts in San Diego participate in the San Diego Immunization Registry (SDIR). By having access to the SDIR, school personnel can look up a student's immunization record, print out an official California yellow card and create a blue CSIR card. This reduces time spent in trying to retrieve a lost card, decipher illegible shot information, call physician's offices, and manually record the information on the CSIR card. For more information, training, etc. contact SDIR <http://www.sdiz.org/Schools-CC/SDIR-Helps-Schools.html>

Note: parents/guardians can submit immunization information to the registry. <http://www.sdiz.org/CAIR-SDIR/Keep-IZs-Online.html>

Reviewing Student's Personal Records

California law requires that an immunization record must be presented by the parents or guardians of students before admission to any California school or child care center (public or private) or family care program. Usually this is the child's personal immunization record given to parents by the doctor or clinic which shows the date each vaccine was received. In most cases it will be a yellow California Immunization Record or similar form.

Completing the California School Immunization Record

If using a paper CSIR (as opposed to registry), the parent or guardian may enter the identifying information on the top of the record, but all immunizations dates must be entered by school staff or child care provider. Full dates (month/day/year) should be used. If a child enrolls with incomplete immunizations, subsequent immunizations should be recorded on the CSIR. Instructions for completing the CSIR are on the back of the card and in *The California Immunization Handbook*.

Exemptions

Exemptions to the immunization requirements and documentation are explained in the California Immunization Handbook. They include a Personal Beliefs Exemptions (PBE) and permanent or temporary medical exemptions. A separate PBE form must be completed for the 7th grade pertussis immunization requirement.

Determining if Immunization Requirements are Met

The current California requirements (Immunization Requirements for Grades K-12) can be found on the California Department of Public Health Immunization Branch's ShotsForSchool.org website <http://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-231.pdf> (12/11). For schools with preschools, early intervention programs or on-site child care use California Immunization Requirements for Child Care <http://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-230.pdf> (1/11)

Assistance in Obtaining Immunizations

The San Diego County Health and Human Service's Public Health Department is required by law to maintain programs to make immunizations available to all persons required to be immunized. For clinic information call 1-866-358-2966. Information is also available at http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/hhsa/programs/phs/immunization_branch/immunization_clinic_schedule.html

District/School Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the School Nurse

- Review current state laws, regulations, and forms related to immunizations in school settings
- Review district policy, procedures and forms related to immunizations and if necessary, make recommendations for revisions to reflect current state mandates or guidelines
- Obtain necessary forms as required by state or local agencies.
- Obtain current information regarding immunization resources in local community
- Train and monitor paraprofessionals participating in immunization screening program
- Educate parents, staff and students about the importance and value of immunizations
- Conduct immunizations programs and supervise participating staff
- Administer immunizations when appropriate
- Establish systems for record keeping/review, referral, and follow-up
- Prepare annual immunization reports (or ensure that the reports are completed and submitted)

Activities of the Paraprofessional

- Assist with immunization screening as assigned by school nurse
- Record results
- Assist with referrals and follow-up notices to parents
- Record parent responses, new immunization dates
- Maintain records on who has met requirement and who has not
- Make follow-up phone calls
- Record results
- Report activities to school nurse
- **Optional:** Assist with preparation of annual reports

REPORTING

As mentioned above there are two reports that are due each year.

The Kindergarten Immunization report is due October 15

The 7th Grade Pertussis (Tdap) Assessment is due December 1

For reporting follow the directions on the Shots for School website

<http://www.shotsforschool.org/>

The site has instructions on how to log in, complete and submit the reports.

References/Resources

Immunization Schedules 2012

Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/ACIP/>

Committee on Infectious Diseases of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/129/2/385.full.pdf>

American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)

<http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/clinical/immunizationres.html>

California Immunization Requirements

California Department of Public Health – Immunization Branch – School Immunization Law

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/CaliforniaImmunizationSchoolLaw.aspx>

California Shots for Schools tool-kit, reporting and more: <http://www.shotsforschool.org/>

San Diego Immunization Branch <http://www.sdiz.org/>

San Diego Child Care/ Schools Information <http://www.sdiz.org/Schools-CC/Materials-Resources-for-Staff.html>

General Immunization Information

The American Academy of Pediatrics: www.cispimmunize.org/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Vaccine Information page: www.cdc.gov/vaccines

Immunization Action Coalition: www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4017.htm

A History of Vaccines <http://www.historyofvaccines.org/content/timelines/all>

Current Immunization Controversies

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/722174>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3096324/>

Legal References

Health and Safety Code (H &SC), Division 105, Part 2, Chapter 1, Sections 120325-120380;

California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 17, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 8, Sections 6000-6075

California Education Code

46010 Excused absences

46010.5 Exclusion of unimmunized students

49076 DHS access to student immunization information

(Note- on July 1, 2007 the Department of Health Services (DHS) split into two entities- the California Department of Public Health and the California Department of Health Care Services.)

49403, 49426 Immunization by RN

California Business and Professions Code

2727.3 Immunization by RN

Other

San Diego School Nurse Handbook (2000)

Los Angeles School Nurse Orientation & Review Workshops (2000)