

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 08/24/2016

TO: Grant County Media

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

Heather Massart, Public Information Officer
509-766-7960 ext. 16

Schools Across Grant County Start Next Week! *Are your child's immunizations up-to-date?*

GRANT COUNTY – Getting ready for school means getting school supplies and back packs. It's also the perfect time to make sure children are up-to-date on their immunizations. Getting all of the recommended shots is one of the most important things parents can do to protect their kids' health. When children are not up-to-date on all of their shots, they are at higher risk for getting sick and can spread disease to others in their classroom and community. Students can easily spread illnesses to one another because of poor hand washing, uncovered coughs and crowds, such as school. The shots that are recommended and required to enroll in school are available at your doctor's office at no or low cost to families.

August is National Immunization Awareness Month and to celebrate the importance of immunizations throughout life GCHD is encouraging all parents and caregivers to check with their child's primary care provider to make sure their children are protected with all the shots they need going into the school year.

New for the 2016-2017 school year

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

Parents can find out which shots are required for school and child care by visiting: [Washington State Department of Health Vaccine Requirement webpage](#). **"It is important for families to know that kids who aren't fully immunized may be sent home from school, pre-school, or child care if a disease outbreak occurs," states Carol Schimke, GCHD Public Health Nurse and Immunization Coordinator.**

Parents:

No-cost shots are offered for kids up to age of 19 years through healthcare providers who participate in the [Washington State Childhood Vaccine Program](#). They may charge an office visit fee and an administration fee to give the shots. People who cannot afford the administration fee can ask the healthcare provider to waive the cost.

Parents are encouraged to register for [MyIR](#), which allows you to manage your family's immunization records securely online and access to their child's [Certificate of Immunization Status](#). For help finding a



healthcare provider or a clinic who offers childhood shots, call the GCHD at 509-766-7960 or the [WithinReach](#) Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588.

Healthcare Providers and Clinics:

When it comes to vaccines, healthcare providers are parents' most trusted resource. The CDC's web site offers healthcare providers all the educational materials needed to have a successful vaccination conversation with parents www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/conversations/index.html.

For a healthy dose of more information visit:

- [Reliable Sources of Immunization Information](#)
- [Kindergarten through 12th grade](#)
- [Child care and pre-school children](#)

Consultation

Carol Schimke Public Health Nurse
Immunization Coordinator
509-766-7960 ext. 22

###
