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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Children’s vaccine rates declined during the pandemic.  
Health officials remind families to catch up vaccinations  
before summer vacation and travel begins.**

SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO – Early data show general vaccine rates children declined over the last two years, placing Idaho children and teens at risk for vaccine-preventable diseases. As families prepare to travel this spring and summer, South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) urges parents to check their children’s immunization records and make sure they are up to date.

**Vaccine rates in children  
attending kindergarten  
to seventh grade dropped  
from 86.5% to 80.2%  
in the last two years.**



“The last two years have been hectic. Many families delayed wellness and vaccine appointments because they were too busy or were concerned about safety. As we see some of the lowest COVID-19 rates since the pandemic started, we urge families to take the opportunity to catch up on their children’s vaccines now,” said Logan Hudson, Public Health Nurse and SCPHD Division Administrator. “For years our region has used vaccines to protect our children from preventable disease. Fortunately, we can still catch up and keep our kids healthy.”

As families prepare for summer vacations, vaccines should be planned out several weeks before the travel date to give their immune systems a chance to learn from the vaccine and build up protection against disease.

“We’ve seen a few diseases come back because of low vaccine rates in other areas,” said Hudson. “COVID-19 isn’t the only disease we need to protect our families from. Measles, pertussis (whooping

cough), and pneumococcal infections are just a few examples of diseases that have re-emerged recently. Traveling exposes you and your family to more risk, but that risk can be lowered by vaccines.”

Spring vaccines also help parents get ahead of fall requirements for school. Children are required to have several immunizations before entering kindergarten, seventh grade, and senior year in high school. Most colleges and universities also require future students to receive immunizations before enrolling, especially if they plan to enter a healthcare program.

As an adult, general vaccines can range from about 50 dollars to more than 300 dollars a dose. **For children 18 years and younger the cost is covered at all Idaho’s Vaccine for Children (VFC) providers, including the health district.** This leaves only a small administration fee for insurance to cover or families to pay. No child will ever be denied a vaccine at a VFC provider if the family is uninsured or unable to pay.

If you cannot find your immunization records SCPHD can help. Reach out to [scphd@phd5.idaho.gov](mailto:scphd@phd5.idaho.gov) for assistance or call the main office line: 208-767-5900.

Visit our website for a list of required school vaccines or to learn more about immunizations:  
<https://phd5.idaho.gov/Immunizations/>