



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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NEW LAW REQUIRES PERTUSSIS IMMUNIZATION FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN 2011

SACRAMENTO – Under a new law that takes effect in 2011, California middle and high school students must be vaccinated against pertussis (whooping cough). **Beginning July 1, 2011, all students entering 7th through 12th grades in both public and private schools will be required to show proof of a “Tdap”¹ booster shot before starting school.** This requirement applies to all public and private schools. The new requirement was signed into law earlier this year by Governor Schwarzenegger.

“With more than 7,800 confirmed cases and the deaths of 10 infants, California experienced its worst outbreak of Pertussis in more than 50 years,” said California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Director Dr. Mark Horton. “Protecting the health of California’s youth is one of our most urgent priorities. This new legislation will help us achieve our goal.”

California’s parents are being urged not to wait for the new fall school year to get their kids vaccinated, since there will be no grace period and the regulations will be strictly enforced. CDPH recommends that parents have their adolescent children vaccinated now in order to protect them against pertussis and to meet the 2011-12 school requirements. Parents should be aware that the protection from childhood immunization to pertussis wears off, and adolescents may be at risk to the highly contagious disease without a booster.

In addition to the Tdap booster, there are several important vaccines recommended for preteens and teens including the meningococcal vaccine, a second chickenpox shot (if they never had chickenpox disease), and the HPV vaccine series. Everyone older than six months old is recommended to receive a seasonal flu vaccine.

Visit ShotsForSchool.org for more information.

www.cdph.ca.gov



¹ The Tdap booster is Tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid and acellular pertussis vaccine.