

# Children's Health

## Help Protect Your Preteen Or Teen From Serious Diseases

(NAPSA)—Vaccinations are not just for babies and young children. In fact, health experts recommend several vaccinations for preteens and teens. These shots can help protect them from serious diseases, such as whooping cough.

Results of a national survey of parents of preteens and teens 10-18 years old show four out of five parents think that up-to-date vaccinations are very important for preparing their child for a successful school year.

While 83 percent of parents of preteens and teens agree that their children should receive a booster shot to help protect against whooping cough, less than half say their child has actually received the booster shot. The survey also found that only about one in three parents surveyed was extremely or very concerned about their preteen or teen being exposed to a contagious disease such as measles, mumps, polio or whooping cough.

Of all vaccine-preventable diseases, whooping cough is the only one that has been on the rise in the United States. In 2005, there were more than 25,000 cases of whooping cough reported in the U.S. Thirty percent of those reported cases occurred in preteens and teens 10-19 years old. Whooping cough outbreaks often occur in middle and high schools.

One study found that preteens and teens with whooping cough miss an average of more than a week of school. To help prevent this, health experts recommend that preteens and teens receive a booster shot to help protect them against whooping cough, which spreads easily. This booster shot also helps protect against tetanus and diphtheria.

Sonia Manzano, who has played "Maria" on "Sesame Street" for over 30 years, has teamed up with the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) to remind parents



**Sonia Manzano, "Maria" from "Sesame Street," reminds parents about the importance of making sure vaccinations for their preteens and teens are up-to-date.**

to "Give Your Kids a Boost!" This national campaign is dedicated to spreading the word about the importance of making sure preteens and teens receive the recommended vaccines that can help protect them against serious diseases.

"Much of my career has been dedicated to helping young children to learn and grow. I'm pleased to be working with the National Association of School Nurses to help make sure children stay healthy as they grow up, so they have the best chance of succeeding in school," said Manzano. "Kids are never too old for a check-up. Taking our preteens and teens to the doctor and asking if their shots are up-to-date is an easy thing we can do to set them up for a healthy school year."

For more information on the importance of vaccinations for preteens and teens, and how to keep children healthy during the school year, visit the National Association of School Nurses Web site at [www.NASN.org](http://www.NASN.org). GlaxoSmithKline has provided funding and additional assistance to the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) for the "Give Your Kids a Boost!" campaign.