

Give Your Kids A Boost This Fall

Back-To-School Immunizations A Must

(NAPSA)—Each year, children miss the first day of school because they do not have the immunizations needed to enter a particular grade. That’s why the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) want to remind parents to immunize their children on schedule as the best protection against dangerous childhood diseases.

“One of the most important steps a parent can take to maintain their child’s health is to immunize them on schedule against deadly, preventable diseases,” says Steve Berman, MD, FAAP, president of the AAP. “The success of immunizations can make parents think these diseases no longer exist. In reality it’s because the vaccines are working that we rarely see a child with measles, for example. Therefore, it’s imperative that we never take the importance of proper immunizations for granted.”

According to Dr. Berman there are three key points parents need to know about immunizing their children:

- By keeping your child up-to-date on recommended immunizations (see attached chart), you also protect your family and community against the spread of infectious diseases.
- Vaccines are extremely safe. Like any medicine, they can cause mild reactions, but they are by far

	Months								Years			
	Birth	1	2	4	6	12	15	18	24	4-6	11-12	14-18
Hepatitis A (in selected areas) Hepatitis A										■	■	■
Hepatitis B Hepatitis B		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		(■) ¹	
DTaP Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (Whooping Cough)			■	■	■			■			■	
Tetanus-Diphtheria (Td) Tetanus, Diphtheria												■
H. influenzae type b Haemophilus influenzae type b			■	■	■	■	■					
Inactivated Polio Polio			■	■	■	■	■	■			■	
Pneumococcal Conjugate (PCV7) Pneumococcal bacteremia, meningitis and pneumonia			■	■	■	■	■					
MMR Measles, Mumps, Rubella							■				■	(■) ²
Varicella Chicken pox								■				(■) ³

Shaded bars indicate range of acceptable ages for vaccination. These recommended ages should not be thought of as absolute.
 Vaccine schedules are changed as new vaccines, combinations of current vaccines, and indications are licensed. (■)¹ All children and adolescents (through 18 years of age) who have not been immunized against hepatitis B may begin the series during any visit. (■)² Those who have not previously received the second dose should complete the schedule by the 11- to 12-year old visit. (■)³ Those who have not had a documented case of chicken pox or have not been immunized should receive the vaccine.

the most effective way to keep children healthy.

- Immunizations begin soon after birth and continue throughout life. But because the youngest children are especially vulnerable to infection, most vaccines are given before the age of six.

Students in the United States between the ages of four and six need at least two boosters, including the fourth dose of polio (IPV) and the second dose of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR). Additional immunizations may be needed between the ages of six and 18 to continue protecting against such diseases as: hepatitis B, tetanus, diphtheria, measles, mumps, rubella (German measles), and chickenpox.

Together, the American Academy of Pediatrics and Ronald

McDonald House Charities have identified immunization education as a priority. RMHC initiatives in this area include: the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile program, a fleet of mobile pediatric health-care units that provide free immunizations; a partnership with UNICEF to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus in underdeveloped countries; and a program launching next year, “Immunize for Healthy Lives.”

For more information on childhood vaccines and where to get them:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) hotline (800) 232-2422 or www.cdc.gov.
- American Academy of Pediatrics Web site at www.aap.org.
- Ronald McDonald House Charities Web site at www.rmhc.org.