



# VACCINATE BEFORE YOU GRADUATE



*DRAFT COPY*

Dear Parents,

**IMMUNIZATIONS ARE NOT ONLY FOR BABIES.** Adolescents, like infants and young children, need immunizations to prevent disease. As your child grows, the immunizations that are recommended for their age group are equally as important for preventing disease as those recommended for infants. A number of safe and effective vaccines are recommended for adolescents age 11-18. Protect your adolescent from life-threatening, vaccine-preventable diseases such as hepatitis A and B, measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR), tetanus-diphtheria (Td), varicella (chickenpox), and meningococcal meningitis.

**Consider the following facts:**

- In the United States, the highest rates of hepatitis A occur among children and adolescents age 5-14 years old.
- It is 100 times easier to be infected with the hepatitis B virus than HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Over 80,000 new cases of hepatitis B are estimated to occur in the United States each year. Approximately 8% of the cases strike adolescents.
- Of the 846 cases of measles reported in the United States between 1996-99, 22% occurred in those 15-24 years of age.
- Each year, there are 40 to 60 cases of tetanus in the United States, resulting in at least 10 deaths.
- Diphtheria is fatal in 1 out of every 10 cases.
- About one-third of people infected with the mumps virus do not have any symptoms.
- Adolescents are 2 to 3 times more likely to develop severe complications or even die from chickenpox.
- College freshmen living in dormitories are at an increased risk for meningitis. Because meningitis causes flu-like symptoms, early diagnosis is difficult. Meningitis may result in severe and permanent disabilities including brain damage, limb amputation, and death.

Eastern Idaho Public Health District would like you to take advantage of the Vaccinate Before You Graduate program. The program allows recommended vaccines for adolescents between 14-18 years of age to be administered during school. There is no cost for the vaccine only a cost for administration. EIPHD will bill insurance & Medicaid for the cost of administration. If the student does not have insurance or Medicaid there is a small administration fee of \$14.00 to \$34.00. No student will be refused vaccines due to inability to pay.

**If you would like your student to participate please complete the forms and return them to your school secretary, in the envelope provided before:**

**Form Checklist**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Medical History Form**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Immunization Financial Form**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Immunization History Form & Consent**

If you have any questions please call you local county health department nurse (card attached to packet).