Summer Kids Need to be Vaccinated Too

Local News

Posted by: David Haviland

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Olympia, WA - Now that school’s out, kids are gearing up for fun in the sun. Whether they’re going to summer camp, taking a vacation trip, or traveling to stay with friends or relatives, they should be protected from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Summer camps in several states have had disease outbreaks recently. For instance, a mumps outbreak that began in a summer camp last August continues in several Northeast states, so mumps is one of the diseases causing concern this year. Crowded living conditions like camps can promote the spread of disease to unvaccinated kids. Parents should make sure their kids have all the immunizations they need, just like they do when starting school each year.

“Parents want their kids to be healthy and safe, especially when they’re away from home,” said State Health Officer Dr. Maxine Hayes, a pediatrician. “Just as you try to protect your kids from sunburns, bug bites, and injuries, you should also protect them from diseases.”

Some vaccines that kids don’t need in the U.S. may be needed when they travel to other countries. If your child will be traveling, schedule a visit with your health care provider well in advance of the trip. Most vaccines take time to become effective. Some vaccines must be given in a series over a period of weeks or even months.

Parents should also ask their health care provider about the routine immunizations their child may need. Updating their immunizations also prepares children for the upcoming school year.

Parents may need a copy of their child’s immunization record for summer camp registration. Health care providers can use the CHILD Profile Immunization Registry (http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/childprofile/default.htm) to help parents get a copy of their child’s record by printing it directly from the registry.

For help finding a health care provider or an immunization clinic, call your local health agency (www.doh.wa.gov/LHJMap/LHJMap.htm) or the WithinReach (www.withinreachwa.org) Family Health

Hotline at 1-800-322-2588. To find a travel medicine clinic, ask your regular health care provider for a referral or call your local health agency.

Required vaccine information (http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/Immunize/schools/vaccine.htm) and travelers’ health (http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/) information is available online.