

# School Immunization Law Fact Sheet for Parents

Dear Parents:

The Wisconsin Student Immunization law was recently changed. Two different vaccine requirements were added which may affect your child's compliance with the law. The change will go into effect this fall with the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year. **Parents are required to have their children vaccinated.** The following fact sheet should help to answer your questions about the new requirements:

## New Tdap and Varicella Immunization Requirements for Students

### Why are these requirements being made?

From 1986 through 2004, Wisconsin had the 5<sup>th</sup> highest rate of pertussis (whooping cough) in the nation with almost 5,000 cases being reported in 2004 alone. Pertussis outbreaks occur because protection declines 5-10 years after completion of childhood DTP/DTaP vaccinations. Tdap is a new vaccine that is recommended for adolescents and is anticipated to help prevent pertussis from occurring including pertussis outbreaks in schools. Pertussis can place a significant burden on children and parents, as a person with pertussis must be isolated for a minimum of 5 days of antibiotic treatment.

Two doses of varicella vaccine have been shown to be more effective than one dose in preventing "breakthrough disease" cases of chickenpox in children of all age groups.

Recommendations for both Tdap and varicella vaccines are made by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices to the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

### What are the new requirements, what grades are affected and when will they begin?

The Wisconsin Student Immunization Law requires the following beginning in the 2008-09 school year (this coming fall).

- **A.** 1 dose of **tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis vaccine (Tdap)** for students entering **6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades**, and
- **B.** 2 doses of **varicella (chickenpox) vaccine** for students entering **Kindergarten, 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades**.

#### A. Tdap

Required for all 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>  
& 12<sup>th</sup> graders for the  
2008-09 school year.

See your doctor or local  
Health Dept. They offer  
vaccines free of charge for  
students, by appointment  
only.

**EXCEPTIONS** – Child has had a  
tetanus-containing vaccine (Td)  
within the last 5 years. Your  
child is compliant and a Tdap  
vaccine is not required. Make  
sure date of this tetanus vaccine is  
recorded on student  
immunizations at school.

#### B. Varicella (Chicken Pox)

My child has had the  
chicken pox disease.....?

**YES**, my child has had  
chicken pox; **no**  
vaccines needed.  
Make sure date of  
disease is recorded at  
school.

**NO**, my child has not  
had the disease. A 1<sup>st</sup>  
dose has been  
administered.

A 2<sup>nd</sup> dose is now  
required. See your  
doctor or local Health  
Dept. for  
immunizations before  
start of 2008-09 school  
year.