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Introduction

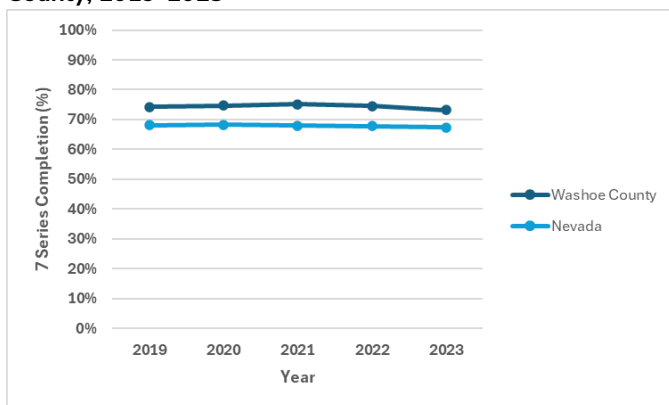
Vaccines are a safe and effective way to help keep children healthy. They work by helping a person’s immune system recognize and learn to fight diseases that can cause serious illness or even death.^[1] This Epi-News presents local and statewide childhood immunization data and recommendations for encouraging vaccination.

Childhood Immunizations in Washoe County

The seven series vaccinations for children includes: four (4) diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTaP); three (3) polio; one (1) measles, mumps, rubella (MMR); three (3) *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib), three (3) hepatitis B; one (1) varicella; and four (4) pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV).

Between 2019 and 2023, approximately 3 in 4 Washoe County children aged 19-35 months completed their seven series vaccinations (range 73.2% - 75.1%, Figure 1). This is 6-7 points higher than the percentage for series completion among all Nevada children aged 19-35 months (range 67.3% - 68.3%). However, immunization rates in recent years have been declining slightly among both Washoe County and Nevada children.

Figure 1: Vaccination Coverage for Seven Series Vaccinations Among Children Ages 19-35 Months: Statewide and Washoe County, 2019-2023



Source: Nevada Department of Health and Human Services

School and Childcare Immunization Requirements

According to Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) [432A.230](#), [432A.235](#), and Nevada Administrative Codes (NAC) [432A.500-.505](#), children must prove immunity to diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, rubella, measles, mumps, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, varicella, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, and *Haemophilus influenzae* type B prior to admission to a child care or accommodation facility in Nevada, unless excused because of a religious belief or medical condition. In addition, it is necessary for children being admitted to child care or accommodation facilities to receive all required vaccines at the youngest recommended age per the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). For example, the fifth dose of DTaP is recommended between four (4) and six (6) years of age. According to this requirement, a child enrolled in a child care or accommodation facility must receive the fifth dose of DTaP at 4 years old and has 30 days to complete this requirement after their 4th birthday. Any child who is behind on Nevada's required immunizations must be brought up-to-date utilizing the ACIP Catch Up Schedule to continue to attend the facility.³

Children entering kindergarten should be vaccinated for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, rubella, measles, mumps, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and varicella. Children entering 7th grade should also have a dose of meningococcal vaccine (MenACWY) and a Tdap. A second dose of meningococcal vaccine should be given by age 16.⁴

Recommendations

Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH) encourages healthcare providers to review their pediatric

patients' vaccination records during every visit and strongly recommend timely vaccinations. Parents consider their child's healthcare professional to be their most trusted source of information when it comes to vaccines. Strongly recommending vaccination, listening and responding to parents' concerns, and sharing vaccination resources can all help increase the number of children who get their vaccinations. Furthermore, if a parent declines vaccination once, it does not necessarily mean that they always will.^[2] Please continue to remind parents about the importance of keeping their child up to date on vaccines and work with them to get their child caught up if they fall behind.

CDC's child immunization schedule can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/child-adolescent-age.html>. CDC also has suggestions for talking to parents about vaccination at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-children/hcp/conversation-tips/index.html>.

Reporting

The list of reportable communicable diseases and reporting forms can be found at:

<http://tinyurl.com/WashoeDiseaseReporting>

Report communicable diseases to Northern Nevada Public Health. To report a communicable disease, please call 775-328-2447 or fax your report to the NNPH at 775-328-3764.

Acknowledgement

Thank you to all health care providers, infection control practitioners, laboratory staff, as well as schools and daycares for their reporting and collaboration to make this work possible.

References

1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Reasons to Vaccinate. Accessed January 2025 <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-children/reasons/index.html>

2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Talking with Parents about Vaccines. Accessed January 2025 <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-children/hcp/conversation-tips/index.html>

3 Department of Health and Human Services Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH). School and Child Care Immunizations. Accessed January 2025

https://dpbh.nv.gov/Programs/Immunization/School_and_Childcare/School_and_Child_Care_Immunizations/

4 Department of Health and Human Services Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH). Vaccinations Required for Students in Nevada. Accessed January 2025 https://dpbh.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dpbhgov/content/Programs/Immunization/School_and_Childcare/Vaccines%20by%20Grade%20NV.pdf