

# IMMUNIZATION & SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Just the **FACTS**



Children in group settings such as daycares or schools are at increased risk of becoming infected with communicable diseases. In Ontario, the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* requires operators of licensed day nurseries to ensure that the children who are attending are immunized, as recommended by the local Medical Officer of Health. All children attending schools in Ontario must meet one of the requirements of the *Immunization of School Pupils Act of 2013*.

Under these Acts, parents must provide documentation indicating one of the following:

- The child's immunizations are up to date according to the immunization schedule.

**or**

- Medical reasons exist for which immunization of their child is not recommended. This requires completion of a *Statement of Medical Exemption* by a physician or Nurse Practitioner and submission to the Health Unit.

**or**

- Due to religious or conscience reasons, parents have chosen not to immunize their child. A *Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief Affidavit* must be completed and signed by a commissioner for taking affidavits, such as a lawyer or notary public. This document (not a copy) must then be submitted to the Health Unit.



## Suspension from School

The Medical Officer of Health may require the school to suspend a student who is not immunized and is not exempted from immunization.

## Outbreak Procedures

If an outbreak or threat of outbreak of any of the vaccine preventable diseases exists, a child who is not immunized may be excluded from school by an order issued by the Medical Officer of Health. The child may not attend school until the Medical Officer of Health determines that the outbreak or risk of outbreak has ended. Likewise, if an outbreak or threat of an outbreak exists, an un-immunized child in a daycare setting may be excluded by order of the Medical Officer of Health. The child will not be allowed to attend daycare until the outbreak has ended.

The vaccine preventable diseases covered under the *Immunization of School Pupils Act* include diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, and meningococcal disease. Children attending daycare also require immunization against Haemophilus influenzae type b.

***Immunization is one of the most important ways to maintain children's health. Parents are encouraged to seek out valid information regarding immunization that addresses the facts about disease as well as vaccines.***

### References:

Moore, Dorothy, MD (2015). *Your Child's Best Shot: A parent's guide to vaccination* (4th ed.). Published by the Canadian Pediatric Society.

The Canadian Pediatric Society, Caring for Kids, Information for Parents from Canada's Pediatricians. [http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/vaccination\\_and\\_your\\_child](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/vaccination_and_your_child)

Immunize Canada. [www.immunize.cpha.ca](http://www.immunize.cpha.ca)

[www.wechu.org](http://www.wechu.org)

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