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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Nevada Infant Immunization Week – April 16-23

Reno, Nev. (April 13, 2016) — Nevadans will join with the rest of the country to celebrate Nevada Infant Immunization Week April 16-23, when we recognize the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases and to celebrate the achievements of immunization programs in promoting healthy communities throughout the United States.

The state-wide celebration will include:

- Community Baby Bash Immunizations & Health Fair, from 9 a.m. – noon, on Saturday, April 16 at the Southern Nevada Health District’s main public health center, 280 S. Decatur at Meadows Lane. This free event will offer no cost childhood immunizations for Vaccines for Children-eligible babies and toddlers.
- Immunization services are offered in a variety of locations throughout the state, including community clinics, pharmacies, physician offices and health districts. Hours, costs and type of health coverage accepted may vary, so call for more information. Visit vfcnevada.org and use the zip code locator to find an immunization provider near you.
- Immunize Nevada will be giving away water bottles, filled with infant immunization information, to moms who give birth at participating hospitals during Nevada Infant Immunization Week.
- To thank maternity nurses for their role in keeping families healthy, Immunize Nevada will also be providing lunch to nurses at the hospitals mentioned earlier.

Most parents choose the safe, proven protection of vaccines. Giving babies the recommended immunizations by age 2 is the best way to protect them from many serious childhood diseases, like whooping cough and measles — among others. A complete vaccination schedule can be accessed at www.immunizenevada.org/kids. Parents are encouraged to talk to their child’s doctor to ensure their baby is up-to-date on immunizations.

“Vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective tools available for preventing disease and even death,” said Immunize Nevada Executive Director Heidi Parker. “Nevada Infant Immunization Week gives us the opportunity to remind parents of the importance of following the recommended vaccination schedule.”

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) says that vaccines not only help protect vaccinated individuals, but they also help protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of infectious diseases. Among children born between 1994-2013, vaccination will prevent an estimated 322 million illnesses, 21 million hospitalizations, and 732,000 deaths over the course of their lifetimes.

The [Vaccines for Children](#) (VFC) program provides vaccines to children who are underinsured or whose parents or guardians may not be able to afford them. The VFC program helps children get their vaccines according to the



recommended immunization schedule and has contributed directly to a substantial increase in childhood immunization coverage levels, making a significant contribution to the elimination of disparities in vaccination coverage among young children.

Recent measles outbreak

One example of the seriousness of vaccine-preventable diseases is the increase in [measles cases](#) and outbreaks that have been reported in recent years. The United States experienced a record number of measles cases in 2014, with 667 cases from 27 states. This is the greatest number of cases since measles elimination was documented in the U.S. in 2000. A report published in March in the [Journal of the American Medical Association](#) found that among more than 1,400 cases since 2000, more than half had no history of vaccination.

“Vaccines have been successful, which means that many of us don’t really understand how serious the diseases are that they prevent,” Parker explained. “But vaccine-preventable diseases still exist, as evidenced by last year’s measles outbreak. This makes it so important for all parents to educate themselves and to protect their children.”

Protecting babies before they’re born

Protecting babies from whooping cough begins before a baby is even born. The CDC [recommends that pregnant women](#) receive the whooping cough vaccine, or Tdap, during the third trimester of their pregnancy to help protect their babies until they can receive their first DTaP vaccine at 2 months.

“The reality is, these diseases can be especially serious for infants and young children,” Parker continued. “The recommended immunization schedule protects infants and children by providing immunity early in life, before they are exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases.”

Every April for the past 20 years, hundreds of communities across the United States have joined those in countries around the world to celebrate the critical role vaccination plays in protecting the health of our children, families and communities. The United States celebrates NIW as part of World Immunization Week, an initiative of the World Health Organization.

Immunize Nevada is widely recognized as Nevada’s trusted resource for immunizations and community health for all ages by fostering education and statewide collaboration. Immunize Nevada’s vision is healthy communities across Nevada protected from vaccine-preventable disease. For more information, visit ImmunizeNevada.org.

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Links:

Measles Cases: <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/>

Journal of American Medical Association: <http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2503179>

Vaccines for Children: www.vfcnevada.org



Pregnancy and Whooping Cough: <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/pregnant/>