



Madison County Health Department

◇ 493 Medical Park Drive ◇ Marshall, NC 28753 ◇

◇ Tel: 828-649-3531 ◇ Fax: 828-649-9078 ◇

www.madisoncountypublichealthnow.com

Marianna T. Daly, MD, MPH
Health Director/Medical Director

Tammy Cody, BS
Deputy Health Director

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Dear Families,

Starting July 2016, Kith and Kin participants will be required to bring a copy of their child's vaccination records. According to the CDC (The Center for Disease Control), "You want to do what is best for your children. You know about the importance of car seats, baby gates and other ways to keep them safe. But, did you know that one of the best ways to protect your children is to make sure they have **all** of their vaccinations?" If your child needs initial or updated vaccinations please contact your child's pediatrician or visit the Madison County Health Department.

There are five reasons to vaccinate your child:

Vaccinations can save your child's life.

Newborn babies are immune to many diseases because they have antibodies they got from their mothers. However, this immunity goes away during the first year of life.

Vaccination is very safe and effective.

Vaccines contain the same antigens (or parts of antigens) that cause diseases. For example, measles vaccine contains measles virus. But the antigens in vaccines are either killed, or weakened to the point that they don't cause disease. However, they *are* strong enough to make the immune system produce antibodies that lead to immunity. In other words, *a vaccine is a safer substitute for a child's first exposure to a disease.* The child gets protection without having to get sick. Through vaccination, children can develop immunity without suffering from the actual diseases that vaccines prevent.

Vaccination protects others you care about.

Immunizing individual children also helps to protect the health of our community, especially those people who cannot be immunized (children who are too young to be vaccinated, or those who can't receive certain vaccines for medical reasons), and the small proportion of people who don't respond to a particular vaccine.

Vaccinations can save your family time and money.

Vaccine-preventable diseases have a costly impact, resulting in doctor's visits, hospitalizations, and premature deaths. Sick children can also cause parents to lose time from work.

Vaccination protects future generations.

For more information about the importance of infant vaccination, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines>

I encourage you to let me or your child's physician know if you have any questions. Thank you for your cooperation in helping to protect the health of everyone in our groups and in our community.

Respectfully yours,

Rosie Eisenberg
Kith and Kin Coordinator (Smart Start/Madison County Partnership for Children and Families)
Madison County Health Department
reisenberg@madisoncountync.gov 828-713-1787

Madison County Public Health: *EveryWhere, EveryDay, EveryBody*