



## **St. Lawrence County Public Health Department**

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### **Press Release**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **BACK TO SCHOOL IMMUNIZATIONS**

**Canton, NY —**

**St. Lawrence County Public Health Department would like to remind all parents and guardians of school age children to schedule immunization update appointments now in order to prepare their children for the 2023-2024 school year. Right now is the best time to get ahead of the rush in the fall.**

Vaccinations have been required for school attendance as far back as the 1850s. It is a requirement in all 50 states to be vaccinated, as it is widely recognized as an effective measure to prevent the spread of diseases. These requirements have resulted in healthier children and fewer childhood deaths caused by diseases.

While we can't eliminate all diseases, vaccination can greatly reduce the impact they have on individual health in the short term and in the long term. This is true for many diseases like measles, mumps, and chickenpox. This shows that vaccinations work and are an effective way to protect our community.

Students who are not fully vaccinated pose a risk for creating a disease outbreak in their community by attending school, which is why all students must show proof of vaccination within 14 days of the start of each school year. The only exemption available to individuals for school vaccines is based on medical necessity. There will be a small number of students who are unable to get vaccinated due to health concerns, but if the vast majority of the rest of the student body is fully vaccinated, they will be less likely to be exposed to vaccine preventable illnesses. This protective mechanism is why school vaccination requirements provide protection to the whole community.



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The Public Health Department would like to remind our community that if you would like more information about immunizations, be sure to get information from reputable sources. Be wary of headlines you see on social media that don't link back to evidence to support their claims. A great source of information is the American Academy of Pediatrics website, which has an interactive map that details childhood vaccinations across the country. It can be found at <https://downloads.aap.org/AAP/Vaccine/index.html>.

St. Lawrence County Public Health Department offers immunizations for children and adolescents who do not have a primary care provider. Public Health Director, Jolene Munger, recommends families get children vaccinated before the start of school in the fall. This will prevent your child from being excluded from school or having difficulty getting an appointment. "We know the end of summer tends to be a rush of families trying to get into our offices, both at the health department and at primary care offices. Our goal is to distribute the demand for vaccines throughout the summer to avoid it becoming urgent. Although we are happy to administer vaccines at the health department, we do not provide primary care services. We strongly recommend that children receive their vaccinations during a well-care visit. However, we will accept children as they come." The Public Health Department's immunization clinic is located at 80 US Highway 310, Canton, NY 13617. Appointments are required; call 315-386-2325 to schedule.

To learn more about immunization requirements for school-age children:

[https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/schools/school\\_vaccines/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/schools/school_vaccines/)

To learn more about immunization requirements for college students:

[https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/handbook/section\\_1\\_requirements.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/handbook/section_1_requirements.htm)