

Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
286 Water Street
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Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
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TTY Users: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

To: Maine Immunization Providers
From: Maine Immunization Program
Subject: 2014 National Infant Immunization Week
Date: April 24, 2014

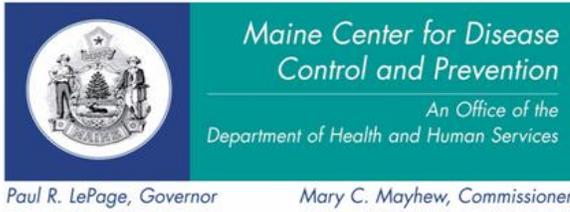
National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is an annual observance to highlight the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases in communities throughout the United States. This year, NIIW is scheduled to be held April 26th – May 3rd.

We encourage you to use the attached posters to help promote the importance of vaccination in infants and surrounding family.

You can find links to information and materials related to (NIIW) at our website:
www.immunizeME.org

Key Points about vaccine are:

- Vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. They not only help protect vaccinated individuals, but also help protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of infectious diseases.
- Infants are particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases; that is why it is critical to protect them through immunization. Each day, nearly 36 babies are born in Maine and 12,000 in the United States and all of them will need to be immunized against 14 vaccine-preventable diseases before age two.
- Immunization is a shared responsibility. Families, health care professionals and public health officials must work together to help protect the entire community.
- Health care professionals play a critical role in educating parents about the importance of immunization and ensuring that infants are fully immunized.
- Because of the success of vaccines in preventing disease, parents often are unaware that their children are at risk for so many serious and life-threatening diseases.
- Vaccine-preventable diseases still circulate in the United States and around the world, so continued vaccination is necessary to protect everyone from potential outbreaks. One example of the seriousness of vaccine-preventable diseases was the California whooping cough epidemic of 2010, resulting in the death of 10 infants. Nationally, there were more than 20,000 cases of whooping cough. There were 82 cases of whooping cough in Maine in 2010.
- Immunization is extremely safe. Vaccines are thoroughly tested before being approved for public use and monitored carefully by doctors, researchers and public health officials.



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This year, during NIIW, communities across the 50 U.S. states, 8 U.S. Territories, and the District of Columbia celebrate the *CDC Childhood Immunization Champions*. The *CDC Childhood Immunization Champion Award* is an annual award given jointly by the CDC Foundation and CDC to recognize individuals who make a significant contribution toward improving public health through their work in childhood immunization. Young children rely on the champions in their lives to keep them safe and healthy.

Those champions may be parents who keep a record of their child's vaccinations and ask at each doctor appointment whether their child is up-to-date on immunizations.

Champions may also be doctors, nurses, physician assistants, or the thousands of other healthcare professionals who share up-to-date information about vaccines with parents.

Each year, awards are given to individuals to recognize them for the important contributions they have made to public health through their work in childhood immunization.

The recipient of the CDC Childhood Immunization Champion Award will be announced within the coming weeks.

If you have questions, please contact the Maine Immunization Program at 1 – 800 – 867 – 4775 or 207 – 287 – 3746. Thank you for your dedication to keep the citizens of Maine free from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tonya Philbrick".

Tonya Philbrick, BS, NCMA
Director
Maine Immunization Program