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## **CLEVELAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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**EMBARGOED until August 15, 2016**

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### **A Healthy Start: Reasons to Vaccinate Your Child**

*National Immunization Awareness Month is a reminder that children need vaccines right from the start.*

(Shelby, NC)— Immunizations give parents the safe, proven power to protect their children from 14 serious and potentially deadly diseases before they turn 2 years old.

To celebrate the importance of immunizations for a healthy start and throughout our lives – and to make sure children are protected with all the vaccines they need – the Cleveland County Public Health Center is joining with partners nationwide in recognizing August as National Immunization Awareness Month. The theme for this week is “A Healthy Start” and will focus specifically on protecting babies and young children through immunization.

Children who don’t receive recommended vaccines are at risk of getting the disease or illness, and of having a severe case. Every dose of every vaccine is important to protect your child and others in the community from infectious diseases. Talk to your doctor or other healthcare professional to make sure your child is up to date on all the vaccines he or she needs.

Today’s childhood vaccines protect against serious and potentially life-threatening diseases, including polio, measles, whooping cough, and chickenpox. There are many important reasons to make sure your child is vaccinated:

- Immunizations can protect your child from 14 serious diseases before they turn 2 years old.
- Immunizations are very safe and effective.
- Immunizations can protect others you care about.
- Immunizations can save your family time and money.
- Immunizations protect future generations by reducing the prevalence of serious diseases.

When children are not vaccinated, they are at increased risk and can spread diseases to others in their family and community – including babies who are too young to be fully

vaccinated, and people with weakened immune systems due to cancer and other health conditions.

Parents can find out more about the recommended immunization schedule at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents) or [www.clevelandcounty.com/cchd](http://www.clevelandcounty.com/cchd) or call the Cleveland County Public Health Center Immunization Clinic at 980-484-5001.

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