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## **CLEVELAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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**EMBARGOED until August 22, 2016**

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### **Send Your Child Back to School Protected From Serious Disease**

*National Immunization Awareness Month is a reminder that we all need vaccines throughout our lives.*

(Shelby, NC)—Back-to-school season is here. It's time for parents to gather school supplies and back packs. It's also the perfect time to make sure your children are up to date on their vaccines.

To celebrate the importance of immunizations for people of all ages – and make sure preteens and teens 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.

Getting children all of the vaccines recommended by CDC's immunization schedule is one of the most important things parents can do to ensure a healthy future for their child. If you haven't done so already, now is the time to check with your doctor to find out what vaccines your child needs.

Preteen and teen vaccines protect against serious and potentially life-threatening diseases, including meningitis, septicemia and cancers caused by HPV.

When children are not vaccinated, they are at increased risk for diseases and can also spread diseases to others in their classrooms and community – including babies who are too young to be fully vaccinated, and people with weakened immune systems due to cancer or other health conditions.

Preteens and teens need Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis or whooping cough) vaccine, quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine, and HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccine when they are 11 to 12 years old. A booster dose of quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine is recommended when teens are 16 years old. Teens and young adults (16 - 23 years old) may also be vaccinated with a serogroup B meningococcal vaccine, preferably at 16 - 18 years old. In addition, yearly flu vaccines are recommended for everyone 6 months or older—not just preteens and teens, but for their parents too.

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

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