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Contact: Tom (630) 444-3098

630-417-9129 (cell)

www.kanehealth.com

Immunizations provide benefits throughout a lifetime

August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) and is used to bring awareness to the enormous impact vaccines have on improving the health of children in the United States.

Vaccination is one of the best ways parents can protect infants, children, and teens from 16 potentially harmful diseases. Vaccine-preventable diseases can be very serious, may require hospitalization, or even be deadly – especially in infants and young children.

The benefits of vaccination are two-fold: In addition to providing individual immunity, high vaccination levels can provide protection against disease to those in a community who would otherwise be vulnerable.

Most parents today have never seen first-hand the devastating consequences that vaccine-preventable diseases have on a family or community. While these diseases are not common in the U.S., they persist around the world.

It is important that we continue to protect our children with vaccines because outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases can and do occasionally occur in this country.

Vaccines are among the most cost-effective clinical preventive services and are a core component of any preventive services package. Unfortunately, we know from our Community Health Assessment that only about half of 2 year olds in Kane County received the recommended vaccinations. Outbreaks of communicable disease, such as the California measles outbreak in 2014, lead to increased absenteeism in workplaces and schools and increased healthcare costs. A robust healthcare system in Kane County working to prevent, identify early, and treat communicable diseases is critical to reducing the burden of communicable disease.

(MORE)

While immunizations have significantly reduced the incidence of many serious infectious diseases, vaccination rates for some diseases are not meeting national public health goals. And we need to remind people that immunizations aren't just for children. They are needed throughout our lifetime.

During the month of August, the Health Department will be using social media to promote the practice of getting vaccinated, throughout one's lifetime. Weekly themes throughout August will be:

Week 1: Preteens and Teens

Week 2: Pregnant Women

Week 3: Adults

Week 4: Infants and Children

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offer a wealth of information about National Immunization Awareness Month on its website at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niam.html
More information about immunizations can be found on the Health Department website by visiting www.kanehealth.com/immunizations.htm.

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