



June 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) wants to assure that all children receive recommended vaccines to prevent illnesses and their complications. DHEC reminds parents and guardians that South Carolina law requires that all students entering 7th grade receive one (1) dose of Tdap vaccine. The Tdap vaccine protects preteens and teens from three serious diseases: tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough). Tdap is one of four vaccines recommended for children to receive between 11 and 12 years old. The other recommended vaccines are human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine, a vaccine that prevents some cancers, meningococcal vaccine (MenACWY) that prevents some types of meningitis, and the yearly flu vaccine.

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, DHEC will no longer offer school Tdap vaccine clinics for 6th graders. Offering one vaccine in the school setting is not a best practice for assuring that children receive all other recommended vaccines. It is important for children to receive routine vaccines during an adolescent well child visit to their health care provider. We are informing you of this change now so that you have time to plan for your child to be vaccinated early, before the start of 7th grade. A good time to get these vaccines is during a yearly health checkup. Your preteen or teen can also get vaccines at a physical exam required for sports, school or camp.

Talk to your child's health care provider about what vaccines your child needs. You can also call 1-800-868-0404 to make an appointment at your local DHEC health department.

For more information about vaccinations in South Carolina, go to <http://www.dhec.sc.gov/Health/Vaccinations/>