

El Dorado extends school-age immunizations

El Dorado Public Health

El Dorado County parents who are interested in their children receiving free immunizations at their school campus through the IZ Xtreme and Kung Flu Fighters programs have until Oct. 1 to turn in registration forms.

“We’ve extended the deadline a couple of weeks so that more parents have a chance to sign up,” said Phyllis Goldie, supervising public health nurse for the El Dorado County Health Services Department.

The vaccines will be administered during the months of October and November. Skilled nurses from the Health Services Department will give the immunizations to the students and return to the school campus for any follow-up vaccines. Parent permission is required.

IZ Xtreme is offered at the middle school level for students in sixth grade. Students in the seventh and eighth grades may also participate. Parents can choose to have their child receive up to four pre-teen vaccines that protect against six serious infectious diseases. The vaccines offered include: Seasonal flu, Meningococcal, Tdap (which protects against pertussis, diphtheria and tetanus), and HPV (human papillomavirus).

“Parents often tell us that their middle school child is up to date on their immunizations,” said Goldie. “But some parents may not know that certain vaccines their child got as a toddler can wear off over time. When a child gets to 6th-8th grades, it is highly recommended that they receive a booster shot of the Tdap vaccine, which is one of the vaccines we are offering through IZ Xtreme. In addition, we are offering two

vaccines that are specifically designed for pre-teens and the seasonal flu vaccine, which is recommended now for all school-age children.â€

As second school-based program offered this year through the Health Services Department is Kung Flu Fighters. This is a pilot program being conducted in a few schools in El Dorado County. Through Kung Flu Fighters, children in grades K-5 of targeted schools can receive the seasonal flu vaccine free of charge at the school campus, with parent permission. Schools participating in the pilot program this year are: Northside, Georgetown and Otter Creek Schools in the Black Oak Mine School District; Sierra Ridge Middle and Pinewood Schools in the Pollock Pines School District; Gold Trail and Sutters Mill Schools in the Gold Trail School District, and; Bijou, Sierra House, Tahoe Valley, and Lake Tahoe Environmental Science Magnet Schools in the Lake Tahoe Unified School District.

Parents interested in having their child participate in IZ Xtreme or Kung Flu Fighters can obtain registration forms from their school office, or download the forms from the Health Servicesâ€™ website at www.edcgov.us/publichealth. The completed registration forms should be turned in to the school office no later than October 1. For questions about IZ Xtreme or Kung Flu Fighters, call the Health Services Department at (530) 621-6112 in Placerville or (530) 573-3165 in South Lake Tahoe.

In addition to the immunization campaigns described above, the Health Services Department will also hold numerous community flu shot clinics this fall and is offering the seasonal flu vaccine free of charge to children six months through 18 years of age. For dates and locations of community flu shot clinics, call the flu hotline at (530) 621-6188.

At this time, the Health Services Department is only offering the vaccine to protect against seasonal flu. The seasonal flu vaccine does not protect against the H1N1 virus. However,

seasonal flu can cause serious life threatening illness in children. The H1N1 vaccine should be available for release later in the year and, if supplies are limited, will likely be provided to high risk individuals initially before being offered to the general community.