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For immediate release

## **August is National Immunization Awareness Month: Send your children back to school protected from serious diseases**

Getting children vaccinated according to the recommended immunization schedule is one of the most important things parents can do to help protect their child's health. Whether it's a baby attending childcare, a toddler going to preschool, or a student heading back to school or college, parents should check their children's vaccination records to make sure they are up-to-date.

Vaccines protect against a number of serious and potentially life-threatening diseases. When children are not vaccinated, they are at increased risk for disease and can also spread disease to others in their classroom 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.

Vaccines are among the safest and most cost-effective ways to prevent disease. They can help reduce time missed from school due to illness, and save money on expensive treatments or hospitalizations.

"Children who don't receive recommended vaccines are at risk of getting the disease or illness," says Deb Purfeerst, Rice County Public Health director. "Getting children vaccinated is one of the most important things parents can do to ensure a healthy future for their child. Talk to your health care provider to make sure your child is up to date on all of their vaccines."

Information is available to help parents know which vaccines their child needs: "*Are Your Kids Ready? When to Get Vaccines, Birth to 16 Years.*" Find it at [https://bit.ly/are\\_your\\_kids\\_ready](https://bit.ly/are_your_kids_ready).

Vaccines are also available at Rice County Public Health for children and adults who are uninsured. These clinics are held every Tuesday from 1-4 p.m. at the Rice County Public Health Department, 320 NW Third St., Faribault.

Appointments preferred, however walk-ins welcome. For more information or to schedule an appointment call Rice County Public Health at 507-332-6111.

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