

# Whooping Cough / Tdap Immunization

## AB354 Requires Tdap Shot for 7<sup>th</sup> Graders

**For the 2012-2013 school year**, and all future school years, all students entering, advancing or transferring into 7<sup>th</sup> grade will need proof of an adolescent whooping cough booster immunization (called “Tdap”) for school in the fall. This requirement applies to all public and private schools. The new requirement was signed into law in 2010.

In 2010, California experienced its worst outbreak of whooping cough (pertussis) in more than half a century, with more than 9,000 confirmed cases and 10 infant deaths. The new immunization requirement is intended to help reduce the spread of whooping cough among California’s youth. Most children are fully protected prior to entering kindergarten because of the DTaP vaccine, a vaccine made for younger children. However, protection to these diseases wears off and preteens and teens may be at risk for catching this dangerous disease without a booster.

The Tdap requirement affects all incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in California, so it’s important to avoid the back-to-school rush and to get our children vaccinated now. Tell other parents with children in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade about the requirement and encourage them to schedule the shot early, before summer.

Remember, in addition to the Tdap booster, there are several important vaccines recommended for preteens and teens including the meningococcal vaccine, a second chickenpox shot (if they never had chickenpox disease), and the HPV vaccine series. Everyone older than six months old is recommended to receive a seasonal flu vaccine.

The California Department of Public Health and the California Department of Education have been working collaboratively on this important measure. Information on the new Tdap requirement, including information on where to get free or low cost vaccines, forms, and FAQs are available at [www.ShotsForSchool.org](http://www.ShotsForSchool.org).

Based on article submitted by the California Immunization Coalition  
[www.immunizeca.org](http://www.immunizeca.org)