

children. Through the advent of immunization registries, the burden of manually assessing immunization records is becoming a thing of the past.

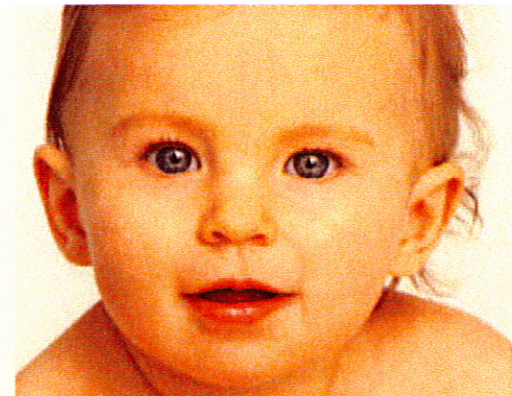
Nearly every state has an immunization information system. The majority of public health care providers, and many private providers and schools are already benefiting from their use. A majority of the systems, which were created with the help of the CDC, began collecting data on children nearly 15 years ago and now contain adolescent and adult information as well. In many states, school personnel are already working with IISs to verify students' immunization status, eliminating the need to make individual calls to physicians to locate missing records.

The CDC and its partners, like Every Child By Two, are working to inform all providers and school personnel about these indispensable tools. These systems are a first step in moving towards electronic health records (EHRs), a majority priority of the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

For more information about IIS

- "Health Care Providers Speak Out on Immunization Registries" is a CD-ROM that describes the benefits of using immunization registries. It includes messages from Mrs. Carter and the former chief of the Immunization Registry Branch at the CDC, and testimonials from clinic staff. For a free copy, please contact Every Child By Two at jennifer@ecbt.org or 202-783-7034. The video can also be viewed on the ECBT website at www.ecbt.org/registries/marketingcdrom.cfm
- For more information about IIS across the country and for contact information for each IIS, visit the Provider Section of the CDC's Immunization Information Systems website at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/iis/providers.htm or at The American Immunization Registry Association at www.immregistries.org

Don't wait... call your state or local IIS staff today!



HOW IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION SYSTEMS CAN HELP SCHOOLS EXPEDITE STUDENT IMMUNIZATION ASSESSMENTS

USING YOUR STATE'S IIS TO REDUCE TIME SPENT TRACKING IMMUNIZATION RECORDS



ECBT's cofounders Former First Lady, Rosalynn Carter, and Former First Lady of Arkansas, Betty Bumpers, were instrumental in passing laws in every state that require verification of immunizations for school entry. As a result of these laws, our country boasts a 95% immunization rate for school-aged children. ECBT recognizes that there is a school nurse shortage nationwide. It is our goal to streamline the burdensome immunization assessment process so that school nurses have time to focus on other critical health issues for school children.

Please take the time to learn more by reading this brochure.

What are Immunization Information Systems (IIS)?

Immunization information systems (also known as immunization registries) are free, confidential, computerized information systems that collect and contain vaccination data about all children and provide immediate access to a child's current immunization status. As families move in and out of public and private health care systems, parents and providers are able to access a central source of information on each child, eliminating the need to obtain records from previous providers. In addition, IISs make it easier for parents to get their child's immunization record for childcare, school or camp enrollment.

Immunization assessments are one of the many tasks required of school nurses each year. While this record keeping is vital to ensure that school children remain protected from vaccine preventable diseases, time is better spent attending to the growing number of health care needs of school



Immunization Information Systems: Why do you need them?

- There are over 4 million births/year (12,000/day)
- By age two, children will need approximately twenty-six immunizations
- Parents must verify immunization status to enroll children in schools, daycare and camp
- New vaccines are continuously added to the recommended immunization schedule
- 21% of children are over-immunized
- 2.1 million children are under-immunized and are at risk for disease
- Few providers send reminder/recall post-cards, a proven strategy to ensure their patients receive timely immunizations
- Parents and providers overestimate immunization rates
- 22% of American children see two immunization providers in their first 2 years of life, making it difficult to track records.

What Benefits Can I Expect to Receive from Using Immunization Information Systems?

Immunization information systems can offer many benefits to school personnel. As a school nurse or school administrator, you are in charge of making certain that all your students are fully immunized and ready to learn. With the ever growing complexity of the recommended immunization schedule it has become increasingly difficult to determine which vaccines are required for each student. Participating in your state's IIS will facilitate disease prevention by providing you with accurate and timely immunization records for each of your students. Using an IIS will help streamline the immunization assessment process, saving school nurses time by alleviating the burdensome task of individually verifying each student's record.



Immunization Information Systems in Action

Wausau County, Wisconsin school district estimated spending 56 hours sending out immunization cards to parents, 90 hours entering immunizations reported by parents into their own system, 25 hours filing cards, 95 hours generating non-compliance letters to parents and 30 hours calling immunization providers to attain records. The school district had a student database for immunizations; however, it was not linked with the healthcare providers in the area. In the Fall of 2000, Wausau County began a pilot project to integrate the student records with the local IIS called the Regional Early Childhood Immunization Network (RECIN). Before integrating the two systems, school personnel had to call student's providers to track down the records, and then enter them into the school system's database. Julie Willems Van Dijk, the Director of Preventive Health Services for Marathon County, and a member of the Wausau School Board hailed the success of the system integration. "Reports required soon after school starts took days to create. With RECIN it takes just a few minutes for the same report." The 95-hour task of generating non-compliance letters was reduced to one hour.

Wendy Garlitz, RECIN System Coordinator, found that many children were not fully protected. She stated that "many children had the correct number of immunizations, but they did not have them at the right ages to be fully protected

against disease. When (school) staff checked records manually, they did not catch the error. RECIN, programmed to comply with state law, does catch those errors."

How Can My School Begin Using IIS?

Schools that wish to gain access to automated immunization data should contact their local health department to determine whether an IIS is available in their town and how the schools can begin collaborating with the registry. Legal considerations regarding access to the IIS and parental consent must be dealt with. For example, while some schools have the authority to log on directly to immunization systems only to view student records, others may be permitted to both view and update the records. In other instances, schools would not have direct access to the systems, but would instead be provided with a printed listing of children's records and compliance status. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations also must be considered. For more information about registries, please visit the ECBT website at www.ecbt.org

About ECBT

Every Child By Two (ECBT) was founded by Former First Lady of the United States Rosalynn Carter and Former First Lady of Arkansas Betty Bumpers. Carter and Bumpers have been working to ensure timely infant immunizations since their husbands were governors in the early 1970's and have been credited with the passage of laws mandating school-age vaccination requirements during the Carter Administration. In 1991, Carter and Bumpers founded ECBT in response to the measles epi-

demic that killed over 120 people, many of them children. ECBT's mission is to raise awareness of the critical need for timely immunizations and foster a systematic way to immunize all of America's children by age two. To forward its agenda, ECBT enlists the support of elected officials and their spouses, concerned community leaders and representatives of many national organizations.

ECBT works in conjunction with the CDC to conduct educational programs for healthcare providers and immunization advocates. We encourage policymakers to support policies that improve the health and well-being of children. We also support efforts to increase state and federal funding for immunization activities. The co-founders of ECBT continue to travel throughout the nation to highlight the need for continued vigilance to ensure that the 12,000 babies born every day receive life-saving vaccines on time. We have assisted in the development of immunization coalitions throughout the country and encourage the involvement of highly visible immunization advocates within the states. We work to achieve universal health insurance coverage for all recommended childhood vaccines and expanded Vaccines For Children (VFC) coverage for underinsured children.

One of ECBT's main priorities is to ensure that computerized immunization information systems are utilized by all providers. We believe that immunization information systems are essential to ensure that children do not continue to fall through the cracks in the health care system. When fully utilized, registries will be the key to institutionalizing immunization delivery nationwide.