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April 21-28 is National Infant Immunization Week

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Department of Health reminds New Mexico parents about the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Observed annually, National Infant Immunization Week highlights the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases and celebrates the achievements of immunization programs in promoting healthy communities throughout the United States.

“Delaying your child’s vaccines or refusing vaccines leaves your child vulnerable and puts vulnerable members of our community at risk,” NMDOH Cabinet Secretary Lynn Gallagher said. “Giving babies the recommended immunizations by age two is the best way to protect them from serious childhood diseases, like whooping cough and measles.”

The NMDOH Immunization Program sends reminder postcards to parents who may have missed age-appropriate immunizations for infants, up to their 12-month well visit. Postcards are mailed monthly to the parents and/or legal guardians of children identified to ensure families are reminded of their child’s immunization needs. The information is gathered from the New Mexico Statewide Immunization Information System.

Vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. They not only help protect vaccinated individuals, but also help protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of infectious diseases.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that among children born during 1994-2016, vaccination will prevent an estimated 381 million illnesses, 24.5 million hospitalizations, and 855,000 deaths over the course of their lifetimes.

NMDOH provides free immunizations at public clinics throughout the state for children whose parents are not insured.

To find a Public Health Office in your area, visit the NMDOH website at www.nmhealth.org .

For more information about what immunizations are recommended and at what age, visit www.immunizenm.org .

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