

Communication Toolkit: Babies & Young Children



Updated 6/9/2017

Vaccines give parents the safe, proven power to protect their children from serious diseases. Parents can provide the best protection by following the recommended immunization schedule – giving their child the vaccines they need, when they need them.

Babies receive vaccinations that help protect them from 14 diseases by age 2. It is very important that babies receive all doses of each vaccine and receive each vaccination on time. After age 2, children are still recommended to receive a yearly flu vaccine. Children are also due for additional doses of some vaccines between [4 and 6 years of age](#). Following the recommended immunization schedule is one of the most important things parents can do to protect their children’s health. If a child falls behind the recommended immunizations schedule, vaccines can still be given to “catch-up” the child before adolescence.

Child care facilities, preschool programs, and schools are prone to outbreaks of infectious diseases. Children in these settings can easily spread illnesses to one another due to poor hand washing, not covering their coughs, and other factors such as interacting in crowded environments.

When children are not vaccinated, they are at increased risk for disease and can spread disease to others in their play groups, child care centers, classrooms, and communities – including babies who are too young to be fully vaccinated and people with weakened immune systems due to cancer or other health conditions.