

400 East Cary Street
Richmond, VA 23219
Health Director: Danny TK Avula, MD, MPH



Phone: (804) 205-3500
Fax: (804) 371-2207
www.rchd.com

"Working Together for a Healthier Richmond"

Dear Parent or Guardian,

In 2014, the Virginia General Assembly passed a law that required all children entering the 6th grade be vaccinated with a booster dose of the tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap) vaccine. This requirement was enacted because doctors had noticed an increase in the amount of pertussis (also known as "whooping cough") in middle school children. By giving kids this booster dose of the vaccine, middle schoolers (and their younger brothers and sisters) are protected from this serious infection.

Because of this requirement for entering the 6th grade, Richmond Public Schools and the Richmond City Health Department have partnered together for the second year to promote awareness of the need for the Tdap vaccine. Mayor Stoney believes in the importance of kids getting vaccinated and starting school on time too, so he is our spokesperson for the 2018 "Level Up Challenge!"

Will you help your child "Level Up" to the 6th grade? All you need to do is sign the enclosed forms and have your child return them to their homeroom teacher. By doing this, you give permission for your child to receive the Tdap vaccine at school. Your child's school will inform you of the date Richmond City Health Department will be there to vaccinate the 5th graders. Or, if you would prefer, you can take your child to their doctor to have them vaccinated there. If you choose to do this, it is very important that you bring proof of your child's receipt of the vaccine to the school nurse. Also, if your child has already received their Tdap booster vaccine, please send proof of receipt of the vaccine to the school nurse (you can call the doctor's office and ask for proof to be faxed to the school if you don't have a copy of your child's vaccine record.)

To help encourage vaccination we are offering a prize! One lucky child from each school who is vaccinated at school, or brings in proof of vaccination to school, will win a \$50 gift card!

If you have questions or concerns, you may call your child's school nurse, or you may call the Richmond City Health Department (804-205-3500). We look forward to helping your child start 6th grade healthy and on time!

Wishing you Wellness,

Richmond City Health Department Immunization Team