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To: Health Officers  
Immunization Program Coordinators  
Communicable Disease Control Officers  
California Immunization Coalition members  
Other interested health care professionals

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#### In this Issue....

#### Top Story: "i choose" Campaign Launches

#### Breaking News: Federal Court Rules Against Link between Autism and Vaccines

#### Staff Changes

- New Interim Branch Chief

#### Statewide Immunization Campaigns

- NIIW/TIM: I Choose to Stay on Track
- Preteen Vaccine Week Celebrations
- Spanish Immunization Website

#### Assessments

- 2008 Expanded KRS Results
- Special Population Study: PBE Review

#### Vaccines

- Halt in Production of Single-Antigen Vaccines
- Rotavirus Updated Recommendations

#### VPD Data

- VPD Provisional Data
- Recent Measles Cases in California

#### Provider Education

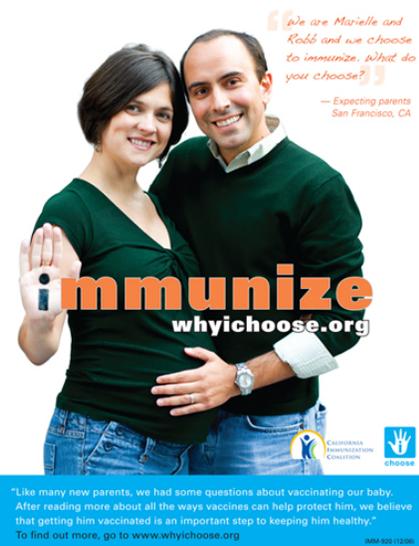
- 2009 CIC Summit
- Introducing CAIRWeb.org
- Branch Staff to Present at NIC

## "i choose" Campaign Launches

The Immunization Branch launched its "i choose" campaign in January 2009. The campaign is the first to utilize the pictures and voices of local advocates to promote immunization. The i choose theme allows individuals from all walks of life to validate and encourage the decision to immunize. It also reflects the choice to vaccinate as a social norm.

The i choose materials can be delivered through a variety of media such as outdoor advertising, print, television, radio, and the Internet.

The campaign website [www.whyichoose.org](http://www.whyichoose.org) offers a suite of posters available for download. The i choose gallery features pictures of people from around the state (and other states) who have taken a stand on the importance of immunizations. The site also incorporates interactive elements including user-generated content. Community members can upload their picture and statement explaining why they choose immunization. A downloadable poster



template is provided. The template is customizable for any age group, ethnicity, or population and audience, including health care settings. In addition, the site offers trusted information resources for anyone inquiring about vaccine safety.

The i choose campaign was developed by the CDPH Immunization Branch in partnership with the California Immunization Coalition (CIC). To learn more about the campaign, or how to implement it in a local community, visit [www.whyichoose.org](http://www.whyichoose.org) or contact [Edgar.Ednacot@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Edgar.Ednacot@cdph.ca.gov).

## **Breaking News: Federal Court Rules Against Link between Autism and Vaccines**

Over the last decade, over 5,000 families filed claims with the federal Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP) asserting that their children developed autism because of their immunizations, despite substantial scientific evidence to the contrary. In 2007, the U.S. Court of Federal Claims reviewed in depth three representative VICP cases of behalf of many families who believe that MMR vaccine, with or without additional vaccines that contained mercury preservative, caused autism (court transcripts at [www.uscfc.uscourts.gov/omnibus-autism-proceeding](http://www.uscfc.uscourts.gov/omnibus-autism-proceeding)). On February 12, 2009, the three judges in these cases ruled firmly against any link between vaccines and autism (decisions posted at [www.uscfc.uscourts.gov/node/5026](http://www.uscfc.uscourts.gov/node/5026)).

Coincidentally, on February 8, 2009, the *Sunday Times* newspaper in England alleged manipulation of data in the initial study from 1998 that implicated MMR vaccine as a possible cause of autism ([www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life\\_and\\_style/health/article5683643.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/health/article5683643.ece)). As you may recall, in 2004, ten of thirteen authors issued a retraction of the original study.

In 2008, the U.S. Court of Federal Claims reviewed three additional VICP cases regarding the theory that mercury-containing vaccines by themselves can cause autism. Decisions on these cases are anticipated later in 2009.

## **Staff Changes**

### **New Interim Branch Chief**

The Immunization Branch announces a transition in top management. Dr. John Talarico, who has served as Interim Branch Chief since August 2008, is leaving the Branch to return to his former position as Chief of Emergency Preparedness Planning, Policy and Coordination in the Center for Infectious Disease (CID). Dr. Talarico was appointed temporarily in the absence of Dr. Howard Backer, who is on special assignment as Assistant Secretary for Emergency Response. The Branch extends its gratitude to Dr. Talarico for his leadership over the past six months.

Beginning February 17, Dr. Robert Schechter, Chief of the Branch's Technical Assistance Section, will serve as Interim Immunization Branch Chief. Dr. Backer is expected to return to his position as Branch Chief later this year.

## Statewide Immunization Campaigns

### NIIW/TIM: I Choose to Stay on Track for a Lifetime of Health!

The 2009 National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) and Toddler Immunization Month (TIM) activities in California will draw on the **i choose** theme with this year's slogan "*I choose to stay on track for a lifetime of health.*" NIIW kicks off the week of April 25 – May 2; TIM continues throughout the month of May. These back-to-back observances provide an opportunity for hosting immunization-related activities, engaging communities, and attracting local media attention.



Coalitions, health departments, and stakeholders are encouraged to use NIIW/TIM as a springboard to promote childhood immunizations. In keeping with this year's theme, local organizations will be able to plan **i choose** photo activities and collect testimonials from individuals who choose to immunize.

All relevant materials and resources are available now in an online campaign kit to assist with planning, promoting, and implementing successful NIIW/TIM activities. To download the campaign kit, go to [www.immunizeca.org](http://www.immunizeca.org). For additional information, contact [Jenny.Bailey@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Jenny.Bailey@cdph.ca.gov).

### Preteen Vaccine Week Celebrations

The Immunization Branch joined with local health departments to promote [Preteen Vaccine Week](#) (PVW) the week of January 18-24, 2009. To reach health care settings serving preteens, the Branch notified 155 school-based health centers across the state about the importance of adolescent immunization and the availability of promotional resources at their local health departments. With the help of the California Department of Education (CDE), the Immunization Branch also provided middle schools statewide with lessons about germs, vaccines, and the spread of disease in their classrooms.



In collaboration with the California Immunization Coalition (CIC), the Branch reached out to parents of preteens by publishing a blog on the [Preteen Alliance](#) website, a Bay Area organization that promotes emotional and behavioral health for preteens.

Local Health Departments across the state worked with schools to organize special activities to reach students for PVW, including immunization clinics, health education, and poster and video contests. Other activities included informing parents about essential adolescent immunizations, promoting the California Immunization Registry (CAIR) to health care providers, and creating county proclamations and press releases about PVW. For more information on promoting preteen immunizations throughout the year, contact [Rebeca.Boyte@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Rebeca.Boyte@cdph.ca.gov).

### Spanish Immunization Website in Development

California has the largest Latino population of any state; more than one-third of Californians are Latino, and an estimated 75% of these do not speak English at home. To assist Latinos and the community organizations that serve them, the California Immunization Coalition (CIC) is developing the very first Spanish-language immunization website.

The website is being developed with the help of experts in immunization and Latino health issues, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Kaiser Permanente, Clínicas de Salud del

Pueblo, and many others. Bilingual and bicultural health professionals are developing website content with input from community members and health advocates.

The website, [www.VacunasyMiSalud.org](http://www.VacunasyMiSalud.org) is expected to launch in spring 2009. It will provide basic information about immunizations, recommendations, the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program, and other resources for the public. For more information, contact [Rebeca.Boyte@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Rebeca.Boyte@cdph.ca.gov)

## Assessments

### 2008 Expanded KRS Results

The Expanded Kindergarten Retrospective Survey (KRS) is one of the only sources about local childhood immunization coverage in California. Five local health departments conducted this survey in 2008. The Immunization Branch worked with the local jurisdictions to select a sample of kindergarten schools to be surveyed. Local health department staff then visited these schools and collected copies of student immunization records for review.

The expanded KRS uses birth dates and immunization dates to estimate retrospectively the immunization coverage rates at 24 months of age among kindergarten students. Coverage rates in the five selected counties are in Table 1 below.

County	Sample Size (n)	4:3:1 <sup>1</sup>	4:3:1:-:3 <sup>2</sup>	4:3:1:-:3:1 <sup>3</sup>
Contra Costa	712	81.0%	79.0%	76.0%
Sacramento	1,581	72.9%	69.8%	62.3%
San Diego	3179	79.0%	76.0%	72.0%
Santa Clara	1,319	83.7%	80.4%	73.9%
Tulare	1,478	71.2%	69.5%	66.6%

1. Four or more doses of DTaP, three or more doses of Polio, and one or more doses of MMR
2. Four or more doses of DTaP, three or more doses of Polio, one or more doses of MMR, and three or more doses of Hep B
3. Four or more doses of DTaP, three or more doses of Polio, one or more doses of MMR, three or more doses of Hep B, and one or more doses of varicella

Source: 2008 Expanded Kindergarten Retrospective Surveys

### Special Population Study: PBE Review

This year, in lieu of the standard fall selective review of seventh grade students, the Immunization Branch will request that Immunization Coordinators and local health department staff visit selected kindergarten schools with high rates of personal belief exemptions (PBE).

Currently, local health departments and CDPH do not know which vaccines have been received by students with PBEs. The Immunization Branch will review California School Immunization Records (CSIRs or “blue cards”) to determine what proportion of children with PBEs are completely or partially unvaccinated and which vaccines are most frequently exempted. Findings from this study will allow the Branch to better target educational efforts for parents. Selective review of kindergarten schools and the Kindergarten Retrospective Survey (KRS) will continue as usual.

The Immunization Branch sent postcards to kindergarten and PBE selected review schools to remind them to update their CSIRs in preparation for the review. Immunization Coordinators can expect more information and materials later this month. The Branch extends its gratitude to the members of the PBE Workgroup and to all Immunization Coordinators and field staff for their work. For additional information, contact [Teresa.Lee2@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Teresa.Lee2@cdph.ca.gov) or [Madina.Sharifi@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Madina.Sharifi@cdph.ca.gov).

## Vaccines

### Halt in Production of Single-Antigen Viral Disease Vaccines

According to reports from the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Merck & Co. Inc. has stopped production and sales of its monovalent vaccines for measles, mumps, and rubella. The manufacturer is instead distributing only its combination vaccine, MMRII, which already accounted for 98% of the company's volume production for measles, mumps, and rubella vaccines, compared to just 2% from its monovalent vaccines [Attenuvax<sup>®</sup> (measles), Mumpsvax<sup>®</sup> (mumps), and Meruvax<sup>®</sup> (rubella)]. It is unclear when, or if, Merck might make the monovalent vaccines available again.

### Rotavirus Updated Recommendations

Updated ACIP recommendations for the prevention of rotavirus gastroenteritis appeared in the [MMWR Recommendations and Reports on February 6, 2009](#). This recent report updates and replaces the prior 2006 ACIP statement. The new report includes recommendations on the use of Rotarix<sup>®</sup>, the latest rotavirus vaccine that was licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in April 2008. The report provides new, harmonized recommendations for both U.S.-licensed rotavirus vaccines, including updated maximum ages for doses, contraindications, precautions, and special situations.

## VPD Data

### VPD Provisional Data

To view provisional data for vaccine-preventable diseases in California with disease onset during calendar year 2008, please visit the [Immunization Branch website](#). For detailed surveillance data by jurisdiction, contact [Jessica.Chang@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Jessica.Chang@cdph.ca.gov).

### Recent Measles Cases in California

In December 2008, Santa Clara County reported measles in an unimmunized nine-month-old adoptee from Vietnam who became ill shortly after arriving in the U.S. She is the 15<sup>th</sup> known measles case in California during 2008.

The infant was not diagnosed with measles or appropriately isolated until the fourth medical visit for her illness. Before isolation, she exposed contacts at her older sibling's school, a restaurant, a post office, a clinic, an urgent care clinic, and an emergency department. She was infectious during the two flights between Vietnam and the U.S., which occurred within four days of rash onset.

Almost 300 contacts were exposed. Of these, 22 required active surveillance because they had received only one dose of vaccine; 12 were found to be susceptible and were placed on quarantine. Due to the

quick response and diligence of the Santa Clara County Public Health Department, no secondary cases have been detected.

The infant had been eligible for vaccination, as the Vietnamese government recommends vaccination against measles beginning at age nine months, compared to 12 months in the U.S. Per federal requirements, all immigrants must show proof of receipt for all recommended vaccines. Even so, parents adopting internationally may opt to delay vaccinations until after they return to the U.S.

The first three measles cases reported in 2009 occurred in a San Francisco family who had recently visited a sick relative in England. The father, whose immunization history is unclear, was first to become ill. His two children are unimmunized because of their parents' beliefs. Both children received immune globulin seven days after their first exposure to their father when he was infectious. They both developed mild, laboratory-confirmed measles. The father exposed over 100 clients and staff during an appointment with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. As the *Immunization Update* goes to press, surveillance is ongoing.

## Provider Education

### 2009 CIC Summit Lays Groundwork for Future IZ Initiatives

This year's California Immunization Coalition (CIC) Summit meeting will feature prestigious speakers to discuss ways to enhance collaboration among stakeholders and promote immunizations across the lifespan.



The 2009 Summit will be held April 21-22 in Pasadena. This year's topics will include the use of new media to influence social change. Interactive plenary and breakout sessions will address best practices, current immunization issues, strategies and activities.

Confirmed speakers include:

- Paul Offit, MD, Chief of Infectious Diseases, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)
- Litjen Tan, PhD, Director of Infectious Diseases, American Medical Association (AMA)
- Lars Ullberg, MA, Assistant Director of Development, Center for the Advancement of Distance Learning (CADE)
- Larry Wallack, MPH, DrPH, Dean, College of Urban and Public Affairs, Portland State University

Meeting organizers expect more than 250 physicians, nurses, pharmacists, educators, administrators, and other private and public immunization advocates to attend. Registration is \$125 until April 6 and \$150 after April 6. The CIC has applied for CME credit for this two-day event. For more information and to register, visit [www.ImmunizeCa.org](http://www.ImmunizeCa.org).

## Introducing CAIRWeb.org

The California Immunization Registry (CAIR) website has a new

address that reflects its unified, statewide identity: [www.CAIRWeb.org](http://www.CAIRWeb.org). Please bookmark this new address. The old URL, [ca-siis.org](http://ca-siis.org), will continue to operate until the transition phase is completed. The new web address will be added to CAIR promotional materials, and older materials will be updated.



The CAIRWeb.org website is a resource for parents, health care providers, schools and other agencies, and registry staff and stakeholders. Key features include a map of the CAIR regional affiliates, a link to California's registry statute, access to online CAIR software demos, and a variety of education and training materials.

## Branch Staff to Present at NIC

The 2009 National Immunization Conference (NIC) in Dallas, TX will have seven presentations from Immunization Branch staff among the hundreds from across the nation. Immunization Branch contributions will cover a diverse list of topics. Anyone traveling to this year's NIC is encouraged to attend any of the following sessions:



- ***“BEAT IT!”: A Flu Shot Contest to Promote Staff Influenza Immunization***  
(Jenny Bailey, Edgar Morales Ednacot, Nisha Gandhi, Deborah Starbuck, & Akon Walker)
- ***Brochure 2 Blog: Technology and the Changing Health Consumer Webcast Documentary and Online Exercise***  
(Edgar Ednacot, Tiffany Sutter, Lars Ullberg, Everly Macario, Natalie Nakahara, & John Reichel)
- ***Determining Provider Compliance with Unannounced Study Visits***  
(John Shieh, Corinne Maloney, Vyla Chan, Carol Connell, Joey Chin, & Severino Paras)
- ***eziz.org: The One-Stop-Shop for California VFC Providers***  
(Leslie Heyden & Natalie Nakahara)
- ***HPV Vaccination in Young Adult Women in California—2007***  
(Eileen Yamada, Nisha Gandhi, and Robert Schechter)
- ***Parental Refusal of Immunoprophylaxis for Infants of Hepatitis B-Infected Mothers***  
(Kathy Harriman, Kathleen Winter, Carol Sparks, Rina Shaikh, John Talarico, & Howard Backer)
- ***Storage and Handling: New Guidelines for VFC Providers***  
(Claudia Aguiluz, Wendi Cate, Natalie Nakahara, & Maria Volk)

Those unable to attend the NIC may wish to mark their calendars for a special CDC-sponsored teleconference, "*Evaluating California's Web-Based Training for Medical Assistants*," held on February 19 at 11:00 a.m. This program, presented by Branch Training Specialist Leslie Heyden, will highlight California's best practice model for evaluation. For information on registering for this event, see the [Upcoming Events table](#).

## Upcoming Events, Conferences, and Observances

Date	Event	Partners/ Sponsors	Website/ Contact Info
Feb. 19, 10:00am - 11:30am	<i>"Vaccines: Wading Through the Confusion,"</i> Virtual Town Hall webinar	Immunization Branch	<a href="http://www.brochure2blog.org/PublicHealthCafe/registration.aspx">www.brochure2blog.org/PublicHealthCafe/registration.aspx</a>
Feb. 19 11:00am – 12:30pm (PST)	<i>"Evaluating California's Web-Based Training for Medical Assistants"</i> and  <i>"Evaluating Washington's efforts to increase post vaccination serology testing for infants born to HBsAg-positive mothers"</i>  Webinar presentations	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Immunization Program Evaluation (IPE)	Participant phone number: 888-322-1985, passcode: 5989553  Participants web access at: <a href="https://www.mymeetings.com/nc/join.php?i=PW5118418&amp;p=5989553&amp;t=c">https://www.mymeetings.com/nc/join.php?i=PW5118418&amp;p=5989553&amp;t=c</a> To check browser compatibility go to <a href="http://www.mymeetings.com/updates/net-systemcheck.php?ver=2003">www.mymeetings.com/updates/net-systemcheck.php?ver=2003</a>  The presentation will be archived at <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/progeval/">www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/progeval/</a>
March 3-4 Sacramento, CA	Conference on Health Services Delivery in Schools: <i>"Putting the Pieces Together: Policy, Practice and Resources for School Health and Mental Health"</i>	California School Health Centers Association	<a href="http://schoolhealthcenters.org/2009_Conf_Page2.asp">http://schoolhealthcenters.org/2009_Conf_Page2.asp</a>
March 30-April 2, Dallas, TX	43 <sup>rd</sup> National Immunization Conference (NIC) <i>"Immunization: Blazing the Trail to Healthier Living"</i>	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/nic">www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/nic</a>
April 20-21 Pasadena, CA	Annual Summit	California Immunization Coalition (CIC)	<a href="http://www.immunizeCa.org">www.immunizeCa.org</a>
April 27-29, 2009 Baltimore, MD	Twelfth Annual Conference on Vaccine Research	National Foundation for Infectious Diseases	<a href="http://www.nfid.org/conferences/vaccine09">www.nfid.org/conferences/vaccine09</a>
April 25-May 2, 2009	National Infant Immunization Week	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw/">www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw/</a>
May 1-30	Toddler Immunization Month	California Immunization Coalition (CIC)	<a href="http://www.immunizeCa.org">www.immunizeCa.org</a>
May 12	CAIR Meeting	CDPH Immunization Branch	<a href="mailto:Akon.Walker@cdph.ca.gov">Akon.Walker@cdph.ca.gov</a>
May 13-14 Emeryville, CA	Immunization Coordinators' Annual Meeting	CDPH Immunization Branch	<a href="http://www.izcoordinator.org">www.izcoordinator.org</a>

## New Educational Materials and Online Resources

Resource	Type of resource	Information source
<a href="#">CAIR Quick Guide</a>	Two-page flyer	CDPH Immunization Branch
<a href="#">How is California Doing on the National Immunization Survey?(rev 1/09)</a>	Fact Sheet	CDPH Immunization Branch
<a href="#">2008 Kindergarten Assessment Report</a>	Online report	CDPH Immunization Branch
<a href="#">2008 Child Care Assessment Report</a>	Online report	CDPH Immunization Branch
<a href="#">After the Shots: What to do if your child has discomfort</a>	Multi-lingual flyers; available in 11 languages	Immunization Action Coalition
<a href="#">Childhood flu materials in multiple languages</a>	Flyers, fact sheets, posters	Childhood Influenza Immunization Coalition
<a href="#">2009 Immunization Schedules</a>	<i>MMWR</i> report with tables	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
<a href="#">All About Vaccines (for adults)</a>	e-article	Heidi Murkoff, author of <i>What to Expect When You're Expecting</i> <a href="http://www.whattoexpect.com">www.whattoexpect.com</a>
<a href="#">I Don't Know What to Believe</a>	Guide to evaluating scientific research claims in the media	<a href="http://www.senseaboutscience.org.uk/">www.senseaboutscience.org.uk/</a>
<a href="#">The Problem with Dr. Bob's Alternative Vaccine Schedule</a>	e-article with commentary	Paul A. Offit, MD and Charlotte A. Moser, MD <i>Pediatrics</i> 2009; 123: e164-e169
<a href="#">Event Planning Kit</a>	Online kit	Immunization Technical Assistance Network (IZTA)