

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Code of Virginia mandates that any child entering the 6th grade **MUST** receive a booster of a pertussis-containing vaccine prior to the first day of school. Currently, the only booster available contains tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular-pertussis (tdap). Trade names for this vaccine include Adacel or Boostrix.

If your child has not received a tetanus booster within the past 5 years, he or she is required to have the booster in order to be enrolled in the 6th grade. If your child has had a tetanus booster within the past 5 years, **you must provide an immunization record** proving your child did receive this booster. **Also, your child's physician must complete a medical exemption stating your child has had a TD within the past 5 years.**

If your child will only be 10 years of age at the start of the school year and will be entering 6th grade, your child must either get the Boostrix vaccine (which can be given to 10 year olds) or your child's doctor must provide a written medical exemption in order for your child to enroll in the 6th grade. Once your child has his or her birthday, he/she will be required to provide proof of tdap vaccination in order to continue coming to school.

The immunization can be provided free at the Tazewell County Health Department. If you prefer, you can take your child to their regular health care provider to receive the booster. Between 11 and 12 years of age, your child needs to see their health care provider for other reasons as well. This is a good time to discuss other needed vaccines such as the vaccine to prevent meningitis and HPV. Also, a physical exam to look for early signs and symptoms of illness, anticipatory guidance and information that is developmentally appropriate can be done at a well child visit.

YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENROLL IF YOU DO NOT GET THE TDAP BOOSTER OR THE MEDICAL EXEMPTION PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. If you want to get your child the shot before the end of this school year (while your child is still in 5th grade), bring the child's shot record to the school nurse at the elementary school where your child is enrolled. IF your child gets the shot over the summer, take the shot record to the middle school where your child will be enrolled in the fall.

Thank you,
School Health Services