



## **Immunisation Position Statement**

For more than 200 years, the use of vaccines has been instrumental in reducing the burden of many infectious diseases. Vaccination has been demonstrated to be a safe and effective public health intervention, and worldwide it has been estimated that immunisation programs prevent approximately 2.5 million deaths each year. (1) The global eradication of smallpox in 1979, near elimination of poliomyelitis and global reduction in other vaccine-preventable diseases, are model examples of disease control through immunisation.

Vaccination not only protects individuals, but also protects others in the community by increasing the overall level of immunity in the population and thus minimising the spread of infection. This concept is known as 'herd immunity'. Australia has one of the most comprehensive publicly funded immunisation programs in the world, and as a result of successful vaccination programs, many diseases no longer occur, or are extremely rare in Australia.(2)

ANA believes it is the responsibility of all professionals who work with babies and children to take measures to reduce or eliminate the possibility of contracting, or spreading vaccine preventable diseases. For the protection of both the nanny, and the children she / he works with ANA recommends that all professional nannies are vaccinated in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council recommendations for child care educators as follows:

### **Recommended Vaccines:**

- **Pertussis** - this is especially important for educators caring for the youngest children who are not fully vaccinated. Even if the adult was vaccinated in childhood, booster vaccination may be necessary because immunity to pertussis decreases over time.
- **Measles–Mumps–Rubella (MMR)** - for educators born during or since 1966 who do not have vaccination records of two doses of MMR, or do not have antibodies against rubella.
- **Varicella (Chicken Pox)** - for educators who have not previously had varicella (a blood test is required to prove previous infection).
- **Hepatitis A and B** - because young children can be infectious even if they are not showing any symptoms.

Educators should also consider having **yearly influenza vaccinations**. Influenza, a serious illness very infectious and can spread through the air by coughing and sneezing, as well as by hands, cups and other objects that have been in contact with an infected person's mouth or nose.

For more information:

- Visit your GP
- [http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files\\_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55\\_staying\\_healthy\\_childcare\\_5th\\_edition\\_0.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55_staying_healthy_childcare_5th_edition_0.pdf)
- <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/>

## References

(1) World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, World Bank. State of the world's vaccines and immunization. 3rd ed. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2009. Available at: [whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2009/9789241563864\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2009/9789241563864_eng.pdf)

(2) Chiu C, Dey A, Wang H, et al. Vaccine preventable diseases in Australia, 2005 to 2007. Communicable Diseases Intelligence 2010;34 Suppl:ix-S167.

Staying Healthy.  
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10th Edition, 2013.