

Programs Help Ease the Cost of Immunizing Children

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Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), local health departments are able to vaccinate children 11 years of age and older that have a high co-pay or high deductible and cannot afford out-of-pocket expenses for vaccines. All sixth grade students 11 years of age and older, as well as all children 11 through 18 years of age who are changing school districts, may receive the following ARRA vaccines: tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap/Td); meningococcal (MCV4); and varicella (chickenpox).

Additionally, the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program provides vaccines to eligible children and adolescents. If parents have medical insurance that does not cover vaccines, their children are considered under-insured and may be able to receive vaccines through the VFC program. Under this program, physicians cannot charge parents for vaccines, but they may be asked to pay a small fee to the doctor for giving the vaccines. Parents should talk with their doctor or nurse if they cannot afford the fee. Children 18 years of age or younger can receive VFC vaccine if they: 1) are on Medicaid; 2) are eligible for Medicaid; 3) do not have health insurance; 4) are American Indian or Alaskan Native; or 5) are under-insured.