

**Title of Intervention:** Mass distribution of free influenza vaccine in a public school system

**Intervention Strategies:** Group Education, Provider Education, Supportive Relationships, Campaigns and Promotions, Environments and Policies

**Purpose of the Intervention:** To increase influenza immunization among schoolchildren and staff

**Population:** Students over the age of five and staff members (ages 5 to 49)

**Setting:** Knox County public school system; school-based

**Partners:** Local health department

**Intervention Description:**

- Group Education: Informal presentations were made to school principals and the parent teacher association.
- Provider Education: Informal presentations were made to the regional children's hospital staff and at a local medical organization. Information about childhood influenza immunizations and live attenuated influenza vaccine was sent directly to local health care providers' offices and hospitals through fax and mail.
- Supportive Relationships: Health departments established a telephone help-line for questions from parents, school staff members, students and health care providers.
- Environments and Policies: Vaccines were administered by health department staff at schools free of charge.
- Campaigns and Promotions: News media were informed through press releases and interviews with health department staff members. Schools sent home an introductory letter, a vaccine information sheet, the CDC live attenuated influenza vaccine information statement, and a consent form with each student.

**Theory:** Not mentioned

**Resources Required:**

- Staff/Volunteers: Vaccine administration staff, helpline staff, educators
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Computers, printers, telephone helpline system
- Space: Immunizations, presentations
- Budget: \$43,000, of which \$28,000 was used to purchase trivalent influenza vaccine (offered to staff only). Vaccine storage equipment and all printed materials cost \$15,000.
- Intervention: Vaccine, vaccine storage equipment, informational materials for students and presentations, consent forms
- Evaluation: Physician questionnaire, parent questionnaire

**Evaluation:**

- Design: Non-Comparative
- Methods and Measures:
  - Information was collected regarding each school's vaccine coverage, student and staff demographics and school absenteeism.
  - A provider questionnaire assessed knowledge, attitudes and perceptions regarding the campaign and influenza vaccines.
  - A parent survey assessed participation.

**Outcomes:**

- Short Term Impact: There was an increase in awareness of the campaign and vaccine by area physicians.

- Long Term Impact: There was an increase in immunization rates for students and staff members. The highest immunization rates were seen for elementary school children and staff members. High school students had the lowest rates.

**Maintenance:** Not mentioned

**Lessons Learned:** Influenza immunization campaigns in large public school systems achieve relatively high vaccine coverage levels but require a substantial resource commitment from the local health department.

**Citation(s):**

Carpenter, L.R., et al., Mass distribution of free, intra-nasally administered influenza vaccine in a public school system. *Pediatrics*, 2007. 120(1): p. e172-8.