



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

As Summer Draws To A Close, Remember Back-to-School Immunizations

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS August 21, 2008

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION, HEALTH**

August is Recognized as National Immunization Awareness Month

Calling it "one of the most important things you can do to prepare your child for school," State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D-Westchester County) today reminded New Yorkers that as summer draws to a close, it's time to make sure their child's back-to-school immunizations are up to date. Immunizations protect children against serious, vaccine-preventable diseases.

"August is a time for parents to do their homework and make sure their child gets immunized, if needed," Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins said. "Recommended immunizations begin soon after birth and continue throughout life, and it's important to get the right shots at the right times."

Children and teens often miss getting vaccinated on schedule because of illnesses or other scheduling difficulties, the Westchester lawmaker noted.

"It's a good idea to make an appointment with your child's health care provider or health clinic as early as possible, since medical facilities are often busy at the end of the month

providing shots for children of all ages -- from those starting daycare or kindergarten right on through to college," Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins said.

New York State's immunization law mandates that every child planning to go to a childcare center or school must be in the process of receiving the required immunizations, which include polio, diphtheria, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, Hib and varicella (chicken pox). In the case of varicella, the requirement varies based on a child's birthdate.

For more information on vaccination services, please call the Westchester County Department of Health at 914-813-5000.

"Fall will be here before we know it," Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins concluded. "In the midst of stocking up on back-to-school clothes and supplies, it's easy for parents to overlook this critical aspect of preparing for the new school year -- that is, until the school nurse calls."