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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 20, 2026**

**National Infant Immunization Week**

*Highlights the Importance of Evidence-Based Vaccination*

In recognition of National Infant Immunization Week, the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department (BLDHD), in partnership with the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA), is encouraging parents and caregivers to protect infants and young children by following evidence-based immunization schedules.

Vaccines are carefully studied through years of scientific research and monitoring to ensure they are safe and effective. Following the recommended immunization schedule helps protect infants from serious and potentially life-threatening diseases during their most vulnerable early years.

Michigan continues to follow a comprehensive, science-based immunization schedule to protect children and families. As of January 2026, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recommends following the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) immunization schedule, even after recent federal changes reduced the number of diseases included in the national schedule. Michigan's approach maintains broader protection and reflects decades of public health research and medical evidence.

"Vaccines are one of the most effective tools we have to prevent serious illness, hospitalization, and outbreaks," said Dr. Joshua Meyerson, Medical Director for the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department. "Following Michigan's comprehensive, evidence-based immunization schedule gives children the strongest protection during their earliest years of life."

The AAP-aligned schedule protects against diseases such as measles, whooping cough, polio, hepatitis, and meningitis. These illnesses can be especially dangerous for infants and young children and can lead to severe complications, long-term health problems, or death.

BLDHD encourages parents and caregivers to:

- Review their child's immunization record
- Talk with a healthcare provider about recommended vaccines
- Schedule routine vaccination appointments on time

Vaccines are available through healthcare providers and local health departments, including BLDHD. Children who are uninsured, underinsured, or enrolled in Medicaid may be eligible to receive recommended vaccines at no cost through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. Eligible adults may also receive certain vaccines at low or no cost through Michigan's Adult Vaccine Program, helping reduce barriers to staying up to date.

Staying up to date helps protect not only individuals, but also schools, childcare settings, and the wider community. More information about Michigan's immunization recommendations is available at [BLDHD's immunization website](http://www.bldhd.org).

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