



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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**STATE OFFERS FREE SHOTS FOR
CHILDREN WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE**

HONOLULU – The Hawaii Department of Health, Aloha United Way, and Hawaii Covering Kids are partnering to inform families without health insurance of a free service to help ensure their children receive proper immunization. ***Protect Hawaii's Keiki, Make a Date to Vaccinate*** is a public education campaign that urges parents of children without health insurance to call 2-1-1 to locate a clinic in their neighborhood.

Many families, roughly 120,000 in Hawaii, do not have health insurance, leaving over 22,000 children (according to the *Hawaii Covering Kids Project*) without access to regular health care. These children often don't get their shots on time and are left unprotected against dangerous diseases, like measles, whooping cough, and hepatitis B.

"We are committed to the health of Hawaii's keiki and encourage parents to make sure their children get their vaccinations on time," said Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, MD, Director of Health. "To help families do this, the Department of Health offers free shot clinics on all islands for uninsured children. Information is readily available by calling 211."

"2-1-1 operators are standing by 24 hours a day, 7 days a week," said Susan Doyle, Aloha United Way president. "Our information and referral specialists will help families locate a clinic where they can get free shots for their children. At the same time, we'll answer questions about health insurance and mail applications to parents and guardians to enroll their children in the state's free QUEST and Medicaid health insurance programs."

For more information about childhood immunizations, visit www.vaxhawaii.com or call the Department of Health at 586-8332. Calls from the neighbor islands are toll-free at 1-800-933-4832.

2-1-1 is a comprehensive, statewide community information and referral service sponsored by Aloha United Way. Hawai'i Covering Kids (coveringkids.com) is a statewide project advocating health insurance for all keiki and 'opio.

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