

Health Care Access

Kindergarten non-medical immunization exemptions

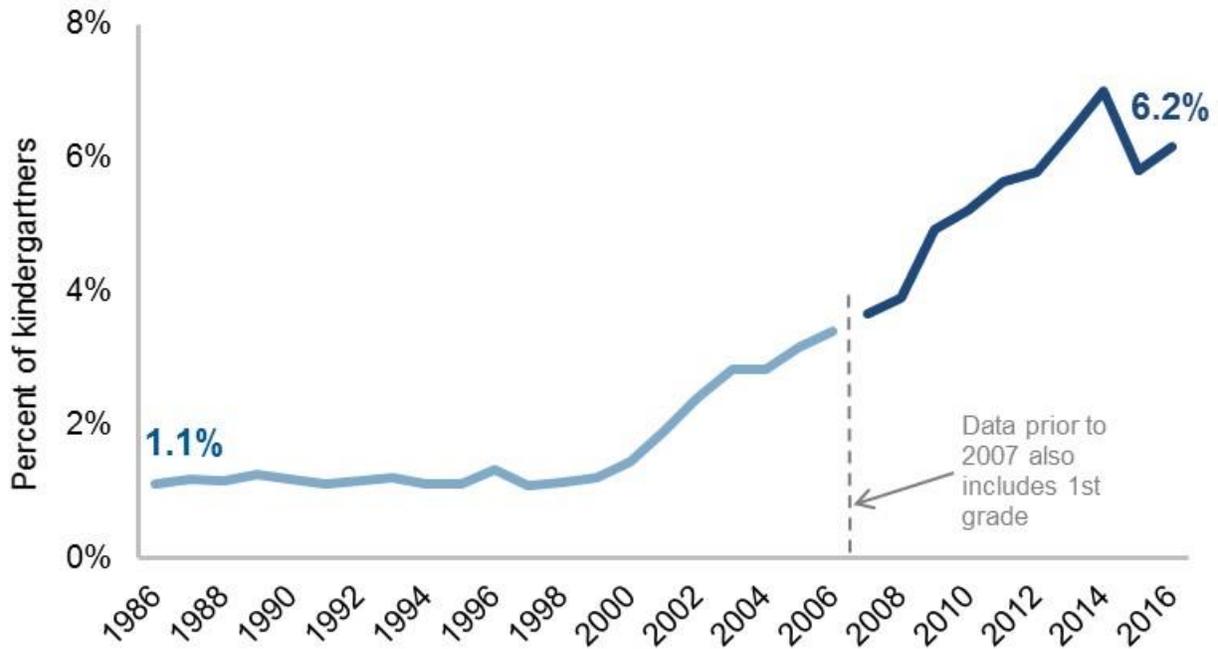
School immunization mandates are an evidence-based best practice for increasing immunization rates and decreasing vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks.

Oregon's school and child care immunization laws help protect children against 11 different vaccine-preventable disease. By far, most Oregon parents choose to fully immunize their children: in 2016, 89% of kindergartners had received all of the school-required vaccines.

Oregon allows exemptions to school immunizations for two reasons: medical and nonmedical. Only 0.1% of kindergartners had a medical exemption in 2016. Nonmedical exemptions can be claimed by a parent who chooses not to immunize their child for any reason, including personal, philosophical or religious beliefs. From 1986 to 1999, Oregon's nonmedical exemption rate remained steady at just over 1% (Figure 1). From 2000 to 2014, the nonmedical exemption rate climbed steadily to 7%. In 2014, a new law changed the process for claiming a nonmedical exemption. Prior to the new law, a parent needed only to sign a form to claim a nonmedical exemption. Since implementation of the new law, all nonmedical exemptions require a parent to receive education about the benefits and risks of immunization from one of two sources: from a health care practitioner, or from watching an online video produced by the Oregon Health Authority. In the two years since the new process started, the nonmedical exemption rate fell to 5.8%, then increased to 6.2% in 2016.

FIGURE 1

Kindergarten non-medical exemption rate by year, Oregon



Source: Immunization Record Information System (IRIS)

Additional Resources: www.healthoregon.org/immdata

About the Data: Data source is the Immunization Record Information System (IRIS). Data include the percent of Oregon kindergartners with a nonmedical exemption to one or more school-required immunization.

For More Information Contact: Stacy de Assis Matthews, stacy.d.matthews@state.or.us

Date Updated: August 2, 2016

[Oregon State Health Profile](#)

OHA 9153-D (Rev) 09/13: This document can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request this publication in another format or language, contact the Publications and Design Section at 503-378-3486, 711 for TTY, or email dhs-oha.publicationrequest@state.or.us.