

**Warren County Public Health
Immunization Program
Annual Brief, February 2022**



Immunizations in Warren County

Vaccines are one of the greatest public health accomplishments. Since their discovery vaccines have reduced the morbidity and mortality rates for more than a dozen diseases. However, trust in vaccines had been eroding prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and only accelerated during the pandemic.

The vaccine narrative has been hijacked by fringe groups and studies suggest that narrative has been promoted through online search engines like GOOGLE through flawed algorithms. As Warren County and the rest of the world emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic it is more important than ever that Warren County Public Health, healthcare providers and community partners take back the narrative. If vaccination rates continue to decline the likelihood of disease outbreaks from diseases mostly forgotten about in the United States increases.

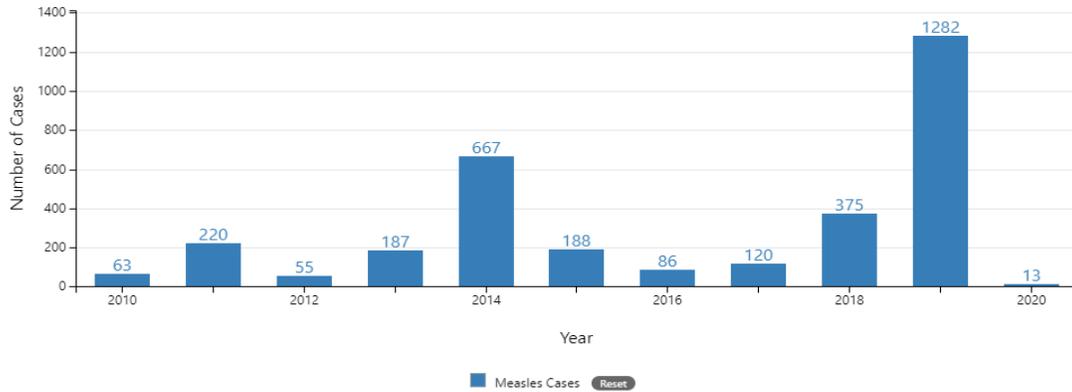
Recent Vaccine Preventable Disease Outbreaks in the US

Measles Outbreaks

The following chart illustrates how quickly a disease can return and impact large numbers of people as vaccination rates decline. In 2000 measles was declared eradicated in the United States. In 2019 the US saw the largest outbreak of measles since 1992. Most of the people infected were unvaccinated. It is likely that measles made its way into the US through travelers visiting from other countries.

Number of measles cases reported by year

2010-2020* (as of December 31, 2020)



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Measles Cases	63	220	55	187	667	188	86	120	375	1282	13

[Download Table Data \(csv\)](#)

*Case count is preliminary and subject to change.

Immunization Rates in Warren County

Vaccination rates among school-aged children in Warren County continue to be very good. The table below shows the percentage of school-aged students up-to-date with their vaccines in Warren County is 98%-99% depending on the year. Following the COVID pandemic Warren County Public Health will monitor the immunization rates of school-aged children to see if there is a drop.

Report Period	Type	% Immunized Polio	% Immunized Measles	% Immunized Mumps	% Immunized Rubella	% Immunized Diphtheria	% Immunized Hepatitis B	% Immunized Varicella	% Completely Immunized	County
2012-2013	County Total	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	WARREN
2013-2014	County Total	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	WARREN
2014-2015	County Total	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	WARREN
2015-2016	County Total	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	98	WARREN
2016-2017	County Total	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	98	WARREN
2017-2018	County Total	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	WARREN
2018-2019	County Total	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	98	WARREN

Bureau of Immunization, Division of Epidemiology and Stat Unit, Division of Epidemiology; School Immunization Survey: Beginning 2012-13 School Year

Adult Immunization Rates in Warren County

Although adults have fewer recommended vaccinations it is still important to monitor adult vaccination rates. Adult vaccination rates can potentially identify the level of trust a community has in vaccines and whether there is an increased risk of a disease outbreak like influenza.

In Warren County 44% of adults 65 and older received a flu shot in 2018. This rate is almost identical to the North Country and NYS (excl. NYC). The percentage of adults 65 and older in Warren County that received a pneumococcal vaccine is 71%. This is similar to the North Country and higher than NYS (excl. NYS).

Warren County Immunization Program

Warren County Public Health continues to work with healthcare providers in Warren County to ensure all Warren County children are fully vaccinated by the time they enter school. Warren County Public Health works to reduce barriers to childhood vaccination by encouraging healthcare providers to participate in the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program which provides vaccines free of charge to children in families that do not have health insurance. Warren County Public Health itself participates in the VFC program and can provide vaccines for children that are not able to get into a healthcare provider.

Warren County Public Health works with schools and healthcare providers to identify children that have fallen behind with their required vaccinations and links the child's family with providers and resources to get the child caught up. For new vaccines or recommended but not required vaccines for adults and children, Warren County Public Health provides education and information to healthcare providers and uses targeted messaging to encourage families and adults to consider getting vaccinated against numerous vaccine preventable diseases.



Conclusion

During the COVID-19 pandemic Public Health has witnessed an alarming erosion of trust in the safety, efficacy and necessity of vaccines. It is possible that over the next 5-10 years vaccinate mandates and requirements could be eliminated or severely weakened through legislation.

The explosion of misinformation about vaccines, the politicization of vaccine mandates, and the slow response from vaccines experts to combat misinformation could lead to a significant drop in vaccination rates. If a significant drop does occur, it is possible that vaccine preventable diseases like polio and measles could be reestablished in the US population leading to higher morbidity and mortality rates across all age groups.

Warren County Public Health wants to take a proactive approach to rebuilding the public trust in the science of vaccines and the important role they play in keeping our communities safe. Working together with local healthcare providers and using State and Federal resources Warren County Public Health hopes to engage with the public to regain their confidence in lifesaving benefits of vaccines.