

CDC Closes Gap on Hispanic Childhood Immunizations

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Closing the Gap, Adult Immunizations Save Lives • November 1998

Disparities in vaccination coverage have been documented previously among different racial/ethnic groups. The October 17, 1997 *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* presents findings from CDC's National Immunization Survey, which documents progress toward achieving the 1996 Childhood Immunization Initiative (CII) by racial/ethnic group and by level of poverty.

The findings indicate that two of the five CII vaccination coverage goals were met for Hispanic children; the other three were within two percentage points of meeting the goals. Results for two of the five racial/ethnic categories—Hispanic, and White, non-Hispanic—are listed below compared with the national estimates.

Based on data from earlier surveys, these differences represent a narrowing of the gap in coverage between non-Hispanic white children and Hispanic children. This narrowing may reflect nationwide efforts to increase vaccination levels in Hispanic populations.

State and local health departments and community and professional organizations have implemented multifaceted efforts in some major urban areas to improve vaccination levels among minority populations.

Since 1994, the National Immunization Project has released nine public service announcements (PSA) in Spanish for use on television and radio and in print. These PSAs target Hispanic parents and caregivers of children younger than 2 years of age. More than one-

half of all calls placed to the toll-free hotline numbers are a result of these PSA messages reaching the public.

National PSAs complement or support the mission of the CII and immunization activities at the state and local levels. Ongoing research indicates that Hispanic audiences respond well to strong, dramatic messages. The ability to transfer this knowledge to practice has allowed the PSAs to win gold and bronze medals and other awards of excellence at the Worldfest International Film and Video Festival in both the health services subcategory and the Hispanic market subcategory.

Further efforts to increase vaccination coverage in Hispanic and other minority groups are ongoing. Achievement of the national Healthy People 2000 objective of 90 percent coverage of all American children with the vaccines in the basic series will require a fully functional vaccine-delivery system and sustained participation of communities, health care providers, government officials, and private-sector partners.

Further information on the survey can be found in the *MMWR* Volume 46, Number 41 pages 963-969. (Web: <http://www.cdc.gov/epo/mmwr/mmwr.html>). To reach the CDC's

Spanish hotline number, call 1-800-232-0233.

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U.S. National Immunization Survey, 1996*

Vaccination coverage levels among all children aged 19-35 months, by vaccines and race/ethnicity

Vaccine/ Dose	1996 Goal	Natl. Estimate	White, non-Hisp.	Hispanic
DTP/DT				
≥3 Doses	90%	95%	96%	93%
≥4 Doses	—	81%	83%	77%
Poliovirus				
≥ 3 Doses	90%	91%	92%	89%
Measles-containing vaccine				
≥ 1 Dose	90%	91%	92%	88%
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)				
≥ 3 Doses	90%	92%	93%	89%
Hepatitis B				
≥ 3 Doses	70%	82%	82%	80%

*Children in this survey were born during February 1993-May 1995.

