

**Date:** May 31, 2019

**Title:** Immunizations/Measles Catch-up Program

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Thank you to your schools and staff for the participation and assistance with the measles catch-up program thus far. As you are aware, the program is continuing through to the end of the school year. The health authorities will still require your help for the transmission of information, for clinics, and for any other activities that are planned for the remainder of the school year. We understand and acknowledge that this is a busy time of year for schools however, the clinics and program are important activities that may still need your attention and assistance.

We also understand that there may be some confusion about Mature Minor Consent and the ability of a student to provide their own consent to immunization. The provision for Mature Minor Consent is found in the [Infants Act](#) and applies to all children under the age of 19 in BC. The *Infants Act* states that children may consent to a medical treatment on their own as long as the health care provider is sure that the treatment is in the child's best interest, and that the child understands the details of the treatment, including risks and benefits. Information on how it works and how it applies to immunizations in particular is found here: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/infants-act-mature-minor-consent-and-immunization>.

In summary, a child can consent to receiving a vaccine on their own behalf if the health care provider has determined that the child is capable of making this decision. Children are also able to refuse a vaccine for which their parent or guardian has consented as long as they understand the risks of not having it. There is no set age for when a child becomes capable, and after a set process for reviewing the information with the child is completed, the health care provider will decide if the child understands the information and are ready to make a decision. If the health care provider is not sure that a child understands, or a child is not ready to make a decision, the child will not be immunized.

Again, thank you for your ongoing support.

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