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Kindergarten-Aged Vaccination Coverage — Alaska, 2017–2024

Background

As of May 23, 2025, over 1,000 confirmed measles cases have been reported across 31 U.S. jurisdictions in 2025, including a third Alaska case reported on May 22, 2025.¹ Measles is a highly contagious disease, potentially leading to serious complications and death. In 2000, measles was declared eliminated. U.S. measles elimination status is threatened as cases continue to rise. During 2001–2022, the largest group of measles cases was among the unvaccinated (65%).²

Declining measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccination rates in Alaska could jeopardize the health of Alaskans. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends a two-dose series, with the first dose administered at 12–15 months of age and the second dose at 4–6 years.⁵ The national Healthy People 2030 target for completion of the MMR vaccine series among kindergarteners is 95%.⁴ In 2024, 92.7% of kindergarteners in the U.S. were up to date on their MMR vaccine series, but only 76% of kindergarteners in Alaska were up to date.³ This *Bulletin* describes vaccine series completion rates, including the MMR vaccine, among kindergarten-aged children in Alaska.

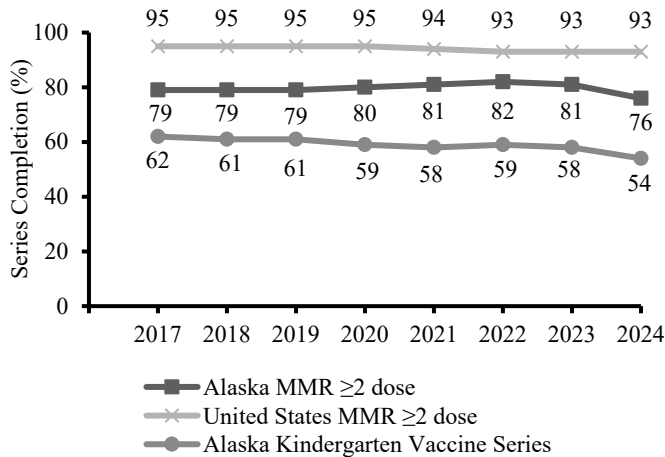
Methods

All vaccines administered in Alaska are reported to VacTrAK, Alaska’s Immunization Information System.⁶ MMR vaccination coverage rates for kindergarten-aged children (5–6 years old) were assessed using data reported to VacTrAK from 2017–2024. Vaccination coverage rates were calculated as point-in-time assessments. The Alaska school-required kindergarten vaccine series includes the following vaccines (number of doses): DTaP/Tdap/TD (5), Polio (3), HepB (3), MMR (2), Varicella (2), HepA (2).

Results

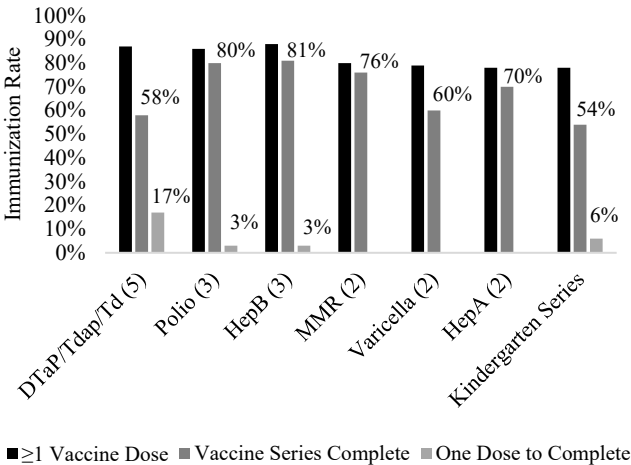
During 2017–2024, the kindergarten vaccination series completion rate declined in Alaska, reaching a low point of 54% in 2024 (Figure 1). In 2024, 76% and 93% of kindergarten-aged children had completed the 2-dose MMR series in Alaska and the U.S., respectively.

Figure 1. Kindergarten-Aged Vaccination Coverage Rates (%) — Alaska and the U.S., 2017–2024



As of December 31, 2024, 78% of Alaska children aged 5–6 years had received at least one dose of the kindergarten vaccine series, while 54% were up-to-date (Figure 2). The vaccine requiring the most doses, DTaP, had the lowest completion rate. Nearly 20% of children were missing their final dose of the DTaP vaccines, whereas fewer than 5% were missing only the final dose of the polio, hepatitis B, or MMR vaccines.

Figure 2. Vaccination Coverage Rate among Kindergarten-Aged Children — Alaska, December 31, 2024, VacTrAK



Discussion

In 2024, Alaska’s kindergarten-aged full series and MMR series completion rates were at their lowest levels since at least 2017. This represents a concerning trend amid rising measles cases nationwide. While 78% of Alaska children began the recommended kindergarten vaccination series, almost half (46%) did not complete the series by 5–6 years of age as of December 31, 2024. Completion rates were especially low for DTaP, which requires 5 doses, suggesting that logistical or access-related barriers might hinder completion. In fact, 17% of 5–6-year-olds were only missing one dose of DTaP. These findings represent an opportunity, as parents of partially vaccinated children might be open to follow-up efforts. Targeted interventions, including reminder-recall systems, school-based vaccination events, and simplified scheduling for multi-dose series, could help address these gaps and improve overall vaccination coverage rates.

Recommendations

1. Schools, early childhood education providers, and health care providers should ensure that children are up to date for all recommended immunizations.
2. Families should review their child’s vaccination records using the Docket app, available at vaccinationrecords.alaska.gov, and take advantage of no- or low-cost vaccines through the federal Vaccines for Children Program or the Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program to ensure their child is up to date on all recommended immunizations.
3. Report suspected or confirmed measles cases immediately by phone to the Section of Epidemiology: 907-269-8000.

References

1. CDC. Measles Cases and Outbreaks. Last updated May 23, 2025. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/data-research/index.html>
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6. Alaska Administrative Code: 7 AAC 27.650. <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/aac.asp#7.27.650>