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NEWS RELEASE

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Kanawha-Charleston Health Department Hosts A Day Of Celebration For Back-To-School Immunizations

CHARLESTON, W.VA. — Calling all Kanawha County school-aged children and teens who like bouncy houses, towering inflatable slides, the Operation game and dunking booths!

Employees at the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department are hosting their first Immunization Celebration on Thursday, Aug. 10, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., at 108 Lee St. E., across from the Charleston Civic Center in downtown Charleston.

KCHD's parking lot facing Lee Street will be closed to traffic and filled with an inflatable bounce house, a towering inflatable slide for the braver kids, a Dunk-Our-Doc booth, an Operation Station, a treat stand, and two stations for handwashing, of course. "We are the health department, after all," said KCHD's Health Officer, Dr. Steven Eshenaur.

"All children who are immunized are welcome at the event. If they do not yet have their immunizations, they can get them on site before hitting the bouncy house or dunking me in a dunk tank," Eshenaur added. "I am sure it will be the most fun they have ever had at an immunization appointment.

"It's been a rough couple of years for the kids and teens in Kanawha County communities and beyond. A global pandemic has a way of making everything harder, so the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department team wants to make sure the kids in our community are not only protected from debilitating and deadly childhood diseases that have seen a resurgence in recent years, we also just want help them have a little fun on what might not be such a fun day for them.

Preschool children, seventh-graders and incoming high school seniors require shots to re-enter school every year. The clinic will be open all day and no appointments are required for shots during the celebration or the next day, Friday, although the big fun is happening Thursday. Beyond that, school shots are available at KCHD by appointment.

Children and teens are encouraged to come and celebrate the day regardless of where they were vaccinated. The event is free and open to the public. Prizes and treats will be available while supplies last. The attractions will be supplied by Quantum Party Rentals and will be open for enjoyment until 6 p.m. A special gift will be provided by Donate Life West Virginia.

There can be no drop offs. A parent or guardian must accompany his or her child for shots and stay at the event with any child under 18. Seniors may hang out after shots without a parent.

Eshenaur threw down a challenge for incoming seniors from Kanawha's six high schools. "We're going to keep a tally of which school rules when it comes to dunking a doctor. So, wear your colors, warm up your throwing arm and try to dunk me. Will it be Nitro, South Charleston, Capital, George Washington, Herbert Hoover, St. Albans, Riverside, Charleston Catholic or Sissonville? Who wants bragging rights?"

"If you want extra points, bring your coach, principal or teacher to dunk. Extra points for that!" Eshenaur said.

He's looking forward to a festive day with positive long-term effects. "School sports are ramping up - kids will huddle together for band, football and cheer practice. Let's make sure they are protected. College students will be in apartments or residence halls, so make sure they are protected. Meningitis is a deadly and crippling disease that is easily prevented with a vaccine. For parents of college-aged kids, learn which immunizations your child's college recommends, and even if they've left for school already, make sure your adult children go get those shots. There's likely a great county health department not far from campus," Eshenaur said.

When children come to KCHD for shots, their immunization records are reviewed with parents. For more information, call 304-348-8080.

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