



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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**ANNUAL STOP FLU AT SCHOOL VACCINATION
CLINICS START TODAY**

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health’s (DOH) annual Stop Flu at School program begins today, and will continue in more than 240 public, private, and charter schools statewide through Feb. 28, 2017. This marks the 10th year for the voluntary program, which administers free flu vaccinations to Hawaii students in kindergarten through eighth grade who are enrolled at participating schools.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends an annual flu vaccination for everyone six months and older. Each year, flu causes millions of illnesses, hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations, and thousands of deaths in the United States, and the most recent CDC report showed flu activity beginning to increase in the United States. Influenza A viruses, often associated with more severe illness, especially in young children and people 65 and older, have been the most common circulating strains so far this season.

“Through the Stop Flu at School program, we hope to vaccinate many of our school-age children,” said Dr. Sarah Park, State Epidemiologist. “Since flu can cause severe illness in people of all ages, we encourage everyone to talk to their doctor to learn more and get vaccinated. Vaccination is our best defense against the flu.”

For more information about the Stop Flu at School program, go to <http://flu.hawaii.gov/sfas.html> or call the Aloha United Way's information and referral line at 2-1-1. To locate a vaccinating pharmacy in your neighborhood, use the DOH Vaccine Finder at <http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/where-to-get-your-adult-and-flu-vaccinations/>.

The Stop Flu at School program is an innovative partnership between DOH, Department of Education, Hawaii Association of Independent Schools and Hawaii Catholic Schools. The program is endorsed by the Hawaii Chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians, and is made possible through funding from DOH, CDC and Hawaii Association of Health Plans.

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