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NEWS RELEASE

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**American Academy of Pediatrics says
80% of Kids Lacking 2nd Dose of H1N1 Vaccine**

SLVHD begins making “reminder calls” to parents today

(Salt Lake County) – Health officials at the Salt Lake Valley Health Department (SLVHD) say that thousands of children in Salt Lake County are overdue for the second of two vaccine doses required to ward off the H1N1 virus and are worried about the repercussions it could have on the children and the community. Starting today, the health department will begin making “reminder calls” to the parents of over 16,600 children needing a second dose.

According to a recent national survey conducted by the American Academy of Pediatrics, about 80 percent of kids who got their first H1N1 shot, never came back to get a second one. Children under age 10 need two doses of the vaccine, administered at least a month apart, to combat the virus.

“A lot of parents figure that it has been more than a month since their child’s first dose and that it’s too late to get the second,” explained Dr. Audrey Stevenson, Family Health Services Director. “But that’s not the case; these kids can still get the second dose now and become fully protected.”

Test results have shown that, like the seasonal flu shot, the H1N1 vaccine provides only 25% immunity in children under 10 years old after one dose. However, immunity reaches 100% in these children after a second dose is administered.

Another H1N1 vaccination problem right now is that many people think flu season is over so their kid doesn’t need a second dose. However, health officials still aren’t sure if there will be a third outbreak wave in the late spring. And, getting children vaccinated not only protects them, it builds a wall of protection to help stem influenza viruses from spreading rapidly through communities,

Finally, swine flu is predicted to be the dominant strain of flu that will circulate next year. “So even if the flu doesn’t come back this spring, by getting two doses, you’re setting them up for protecting them next fall,” Dr. Stevenson said.

Parents wanting to get their child a second dose of the H1N1 vaccine can walk in to any SLVHD health clinic. As with the first dose, the follow-up immunization is free to everyone. For more vaccine information visit the SLVHD website at www.slvhealth.org.

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