

Sample Letter to Influential Organizations

Name
Title
Organization
Address
City, State Zip

Dear _____:

We need your help in protecting the children in our community. During National Infant Immunization Week, April 19 -25, 1998, or anytime throughout the year, influential organizations like yours can contribute to the effort to raise childhood immunization rates and to ultimately protect our children against vaccine-preventable diseases.

Too many parents are unaware that children need at least 12 vaccinations by their second birthday to be adequately protected against certain diseases. Currently, almost 78 percent of children nationwide are fully protected against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, mumps, measles, and rubella. Coverage for hepatitis B, a recently introduced vaccine has already exceeded by 12 percentage points the 1996 goal of 70% coverage.

In 1989-1991 in the United States, approximately 130 people died from measles; nearly half were infants. About 55,000 cases of measles were reported during that time period and resulted in a total of more than 44,000 days of hospitalization. According to studies, costs of treating a preschool child hospitalized for measles range from \$6,800 to \$15,000.

In addition to protecting children from debilitating and fatal diseases, immunization saves money. For example, for every dollar spent on Measles/Mumps/Rubella immunization programs, as much as \$21 can be saved in direct and indirect costs.

As a respected voice within your community, you have the opportunity to impact infant immunization rates by educating members of your organization. We are asking you to disseminate the immunization message during the week of April 19 -25, 1998, by either participating in our activity on (day) at (time) or incorporating the immunization message into an organization-wide presentation, newsletter, or by other means.

Beyond this simple step, you may want to look at other ways of getting involved with immunization issues. We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss facts about childhood immunization or to speak to other members within your organization who may be interested in getting involved.

Attached is a fact sheet on immunization and a list of suggested activities for community organizations. We believe that as a valued, conscientious voice for our community, you perform

a crucial role in the effort to protect our children from deadly diseases. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss your role in more detail.

Your contribution to the immunization effort is greatly appreciated. We will contact you shortly to ask whether you will be able to help. If you have questions, please call us at _____.

Sincerely,

Your name