



2018 Immunization Statistics – Benton County, Oregon

Decades of highly rigorous international research has consistently demonstrated that immunization is the safest and most effective public health tool available for preventing disease and death from a number of communicable diseases.

Thanks to vaccinations, many of the infectious diseases that gripped past generations, such as polio, measles, rubella, diphtheria, and tetanus are rarely seen anymore, but because vaccination is not universal and vaccines are not 100% effective, outbreaks still occur. Nevertheless, vaccination according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended immunization schedules protects our entire community.

School Law

Certain immunizations are required by law for students who attend public and private schools, childcare centers, (preschools and certified student programs), and Head Start programs in Oregon. All states and U.S. territories require vaccination or signed exemptions in order to attend schools, childcare centers, and Head Start programs.

Oregon has one of the highest childhood vaccine exemption rates in the country. In the last decade, the annual rate of nonmedical exemptions (NMEs) for Oregon kindergartners has risen steadily from 2.4 percent in 2001-2002 (first graders included) to 7.5 percent in 2017-2018. Some counties in Oregon have kindergarten exemption rates as high as 15 percent and some schools have exemption rates as high as 70 percent. (Oregon Health Authority - May 2018)

Scientific evidence demonstrates that when a highly-contagious disease is introduced to a school with low immunization rates, the outbreak can spread and more students can become sick. School immunization requirements provide "community immunity" which ensures that those among us who cannot be vaccinated (due to pre-existing medical conditions) are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Recent History of Vaccine Exemptions in Oregon:

Senate Bill 132 went into effect March 1, 2014, and changed the process for parents and guardians who claim a nonmedical exemption (formerly called a religious exemption) for school or student attendance. Under this law, parents and guardians were required to receive education about the benefits and risks of vaccines from a healthcare practitioner or through an online module prior to claiming an exemption.

At that time the new process only applied to students claiming a new nonmedical exemption (NME). All previous religious exemptions (REs) dated before March 1, 2014 were "grandfathered in" and included as a NME.

As the new online module went live to the public on March 1, 2014, the state immunization program developed resources for practitioners to share vaccine education with parents and guardians who were considering a vaccine exemption. Practitioner resources related to Senate Bill 132 implementations included the official form for Practitioners to sign as documentation that education had been provided to the parent or guardian.

Senate Bill 895 was signed in July 2015 creating another new school immunization law. Key changes made by Senate Bill 895 became effective during the 2015-2016 school year. This new law stated:

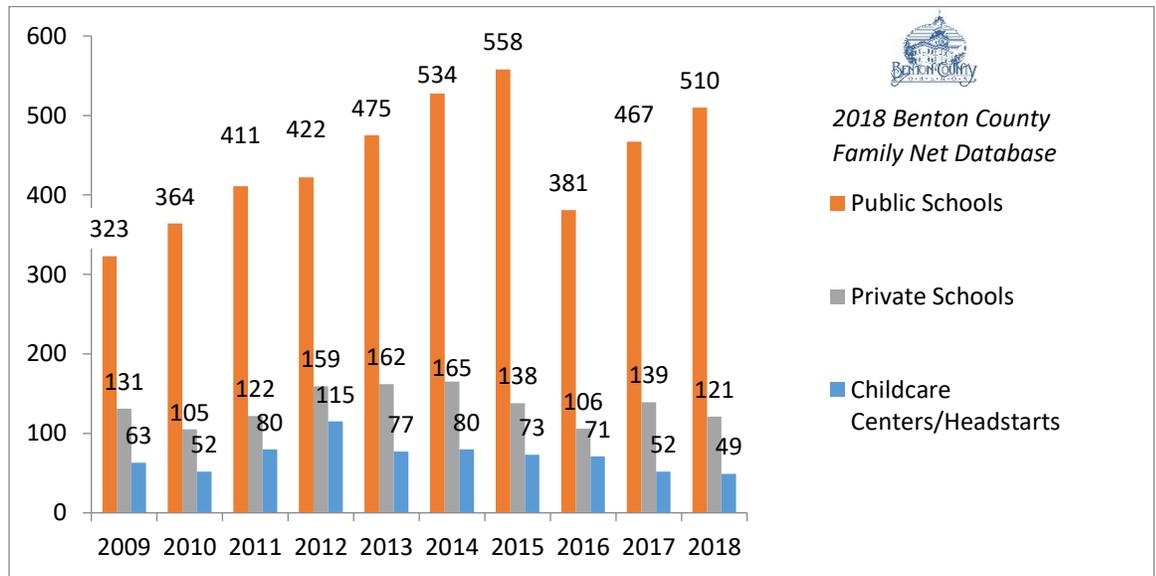
- 1. Religious exemptions signed prior to March 1, 2014, were no longer valid** and parents and guardians were required to turn in documentation of immunization or complete the new process for a nonmedical exemption prior to Exclusion Day in February 2016.
- 2. Schools, childcare centers and Head Starts were now required to post immunization and exemption rates** on their websites and share the rates with parents. Schools and childcare centers were required to have their immunization and exemption rates available at their main offices, on their websites, and sent to parents on paper or in electronic format. Immunization and exemption rates, by vaccine, were required to be included in the immunization report.

Benton County school / student vaccination exclusion data:

The remainder of this report highlights data on: NME counts, sites with students that have NMEs, students with NMEs on file at schools, childcare centers and Head Starts, immunization exclusion counts, the number of exclusion letters mailed, the percent of students excluded that received exclusion letters, and timely reporting. These statistics were collected from Benton County schools, childcare centers, and Head Start programs and reported to the State of Oregon for the 2017-2018 school year.

Nonmedical Exemption (NME) Counts

Students missing 1 or more vaccines attending public or private school, a student facility, or Head Start



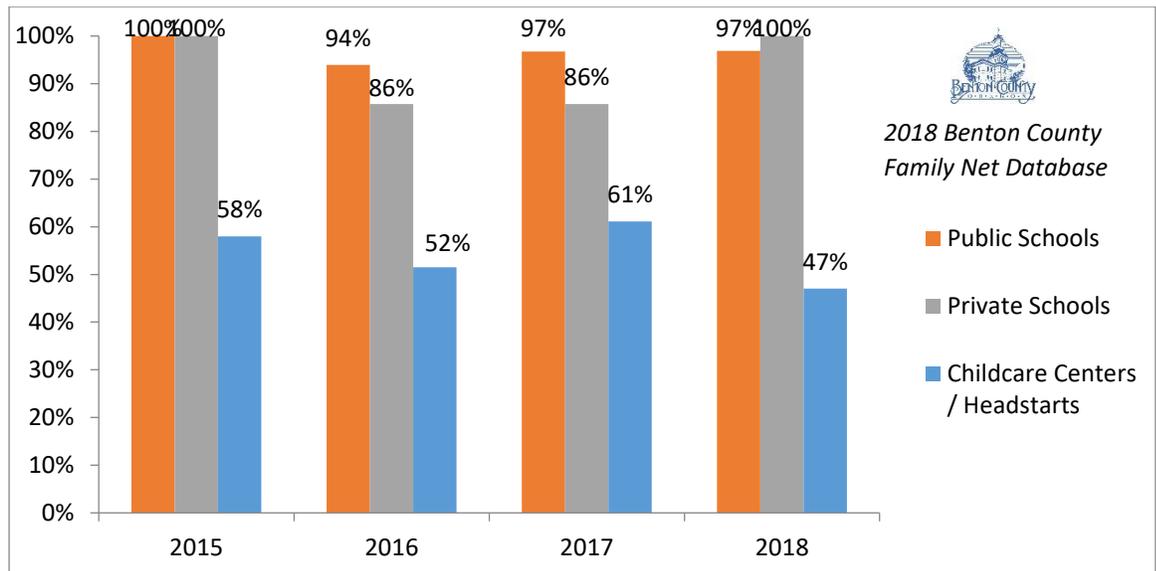
In 2018, NME counts increased by 9% in public schools, decreased by 13% in private schools, and decreased 6% in childcare centers and Head Starts.

In 2017, NME counts increased 23% in public schools and 31% in private schools, and decreased 27% in childcare centers and Head Starts.

Senate Bill 895 became effective in the 2015-2016 school year – this bill invalidated prior religious exemption, and required a new process for nonmedical exemptions. This may be associated with the drop in under-vaccinated students from 2015 to 2016. However, the number of under-vaccinated students at public school has resumed an upward trend.

Sites with Students that have Nonmedical Exemptions

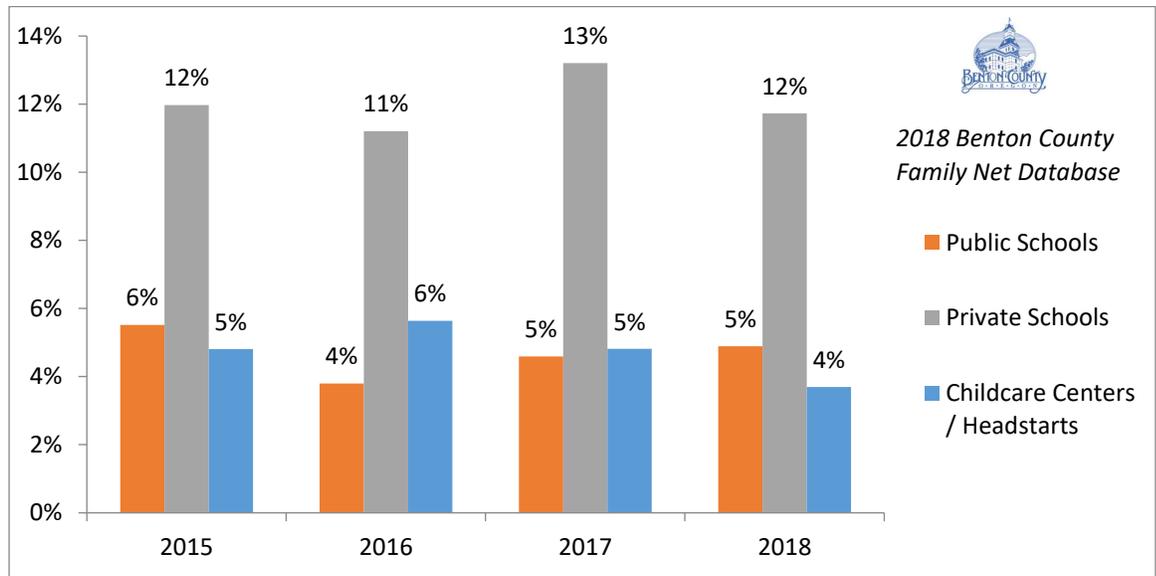
Percent of public schools, private schools, and childcare centers and Head Starts with one or more nonmedical exemptions.



In 2018, the percentage of sites with students with NMEs was unchanged in public schools, increased by 14 percentage points in private schools, and decreased by 14 percentage points in childcare centers and Head Starts. 2015 state law required each parent or guardian to complete an online vaccine education module or have a vaccine education certificate completed by a Practitioner, confirming they had reviewed vaccine benefits and risks.

Students with Nonmedical Exemptions on file

Percent of students with nonmedical exemptions on file.



20 public schools have 10 or more students attending with NMEs. The top three public schools with the largest student populations missing 1 or more vaccines reported NME rates of 22%, 17%, and 15%.

2 private schools have 10 or more students attending with NMEs. These schools had NME rates of 34% and 8%.

No childcare centers or Head Starts have 10 or more students attending with NMEs; these locations also have fewer students than public or private schools.

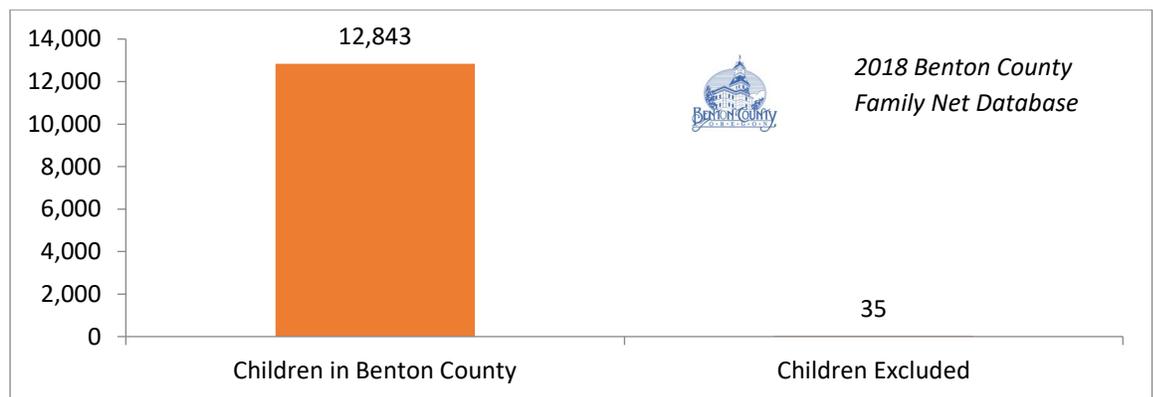
OVERALL:

31 of 32 public schools, 6 of 6 private schools, and 21 of 36 childcare centers and Head Starts have students attending their facilities with 1 or more NME.

The information below discusses the final counts of the 2017-2018 school year reporting period by schools, childcare centers and Head Starts. This data is collected from both the Primary Review and Follow-up Statistical reports that are sent to the local health department in January and March. Students that are not included in these counts are those that receive special services from public or private schools, have moved, are a new enterer after January 1 of the exclusion reporting year, or have already been counted at an additional site; i.e., a student attending kindergarten is counted once in that school's primary review but that same student would not be counted again at an after school site. Students that receive exclusion letters are allowed back at their facility when they are vaccinated or have submitted valid paperwork for a medical or nonmedical exemption.

Immunization Exclusion Counts

Total children enrolled in public and private schools, childcare centers and head starts, and total children excluded.



59% of public schools had no exclusions in 2018; 65% had no exclusions in 2017. 28 students were excluded from public schools in 2018; 20 were excluded in 2017.

No private schools had exclusions this year; 71% had no exclusions in 2017. 2 students were excluded from private schools in 2017.

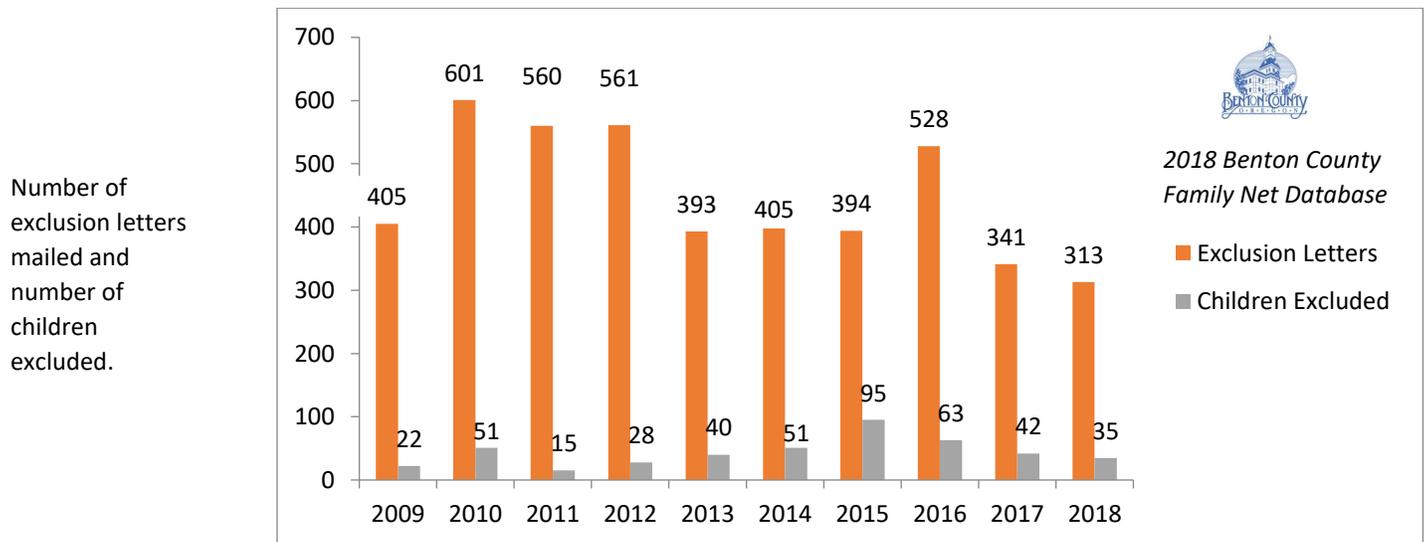
88% of childcare centers and Head Starts had no exclusions in 2018; 66% had no exclusions in 2017. 7 students were excluded from childcare centers and Head Starts in 2018; 20 were excluded in 2017.

OVERALL:

18 of 72 (25%) of all sites reported school exclusions in 2018 and 35 of 12,843 students (0.3%) were excluded in Benton County, Oregon.

Exclusion Letters are sent out to parents, guardians and schools, childcare centers and Head Starts for students who are missing one or more vaccines. Every February the local health department mails exclusion letters approximately two weeks before exclusion day to the each party. Each facility is required to confirm that a student's vaccine record has been brought up to date so they are in compliance with Oregon State Law. No student is allowed to be in a school, student facility, or Head Start unless they are up to date on all their vaccines or they have completed the requirements for either a medical or nonmedical exemption.

Exclusion Letters Mailed



There were 313 exclusion letters mailed in 2018, a decrease of 36 letters from 2017. There were seven fewer students excluded in 2018 than in 2017.

In 2013, health department staff began checking ALERT (Oregon's immunization database) for missing vaccine doses prior to sending exclusion letters. This caused a significant reduction in the number of letters the department sent out for students who actually had vaccine doses on record.

This in turn resulted in the number of exclusions per letter increasing (see chart below). Most of the students sent an exclusion letter truly had not had the vaccine, so it wasn't a simple matter of turning in a missing vaccination record; the student had to go get vaccinated.

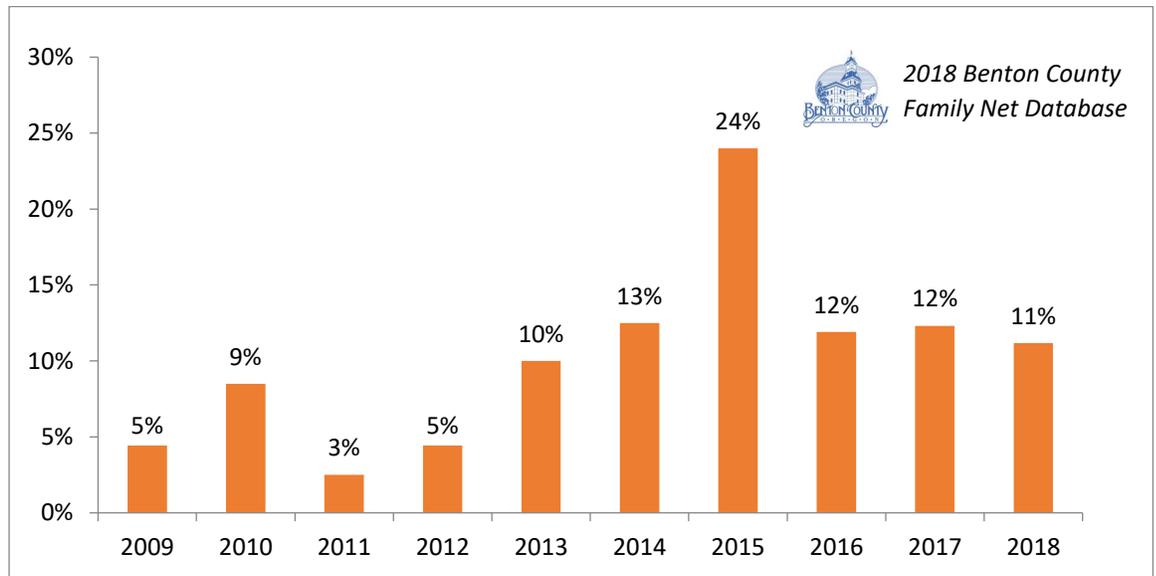
Health department staff continue to do this pre-check, eliminating a large number of unnecessary exclusion letters.

In 2016, the health department saw an increase in the number of letters and exclusions related to the new nonmedical exemption process for new students.

In 2017 and 2018 the health department saw a decrease in the number of letters and exclusions over 2016.

Percent of Students Excluded after Receiving Letters

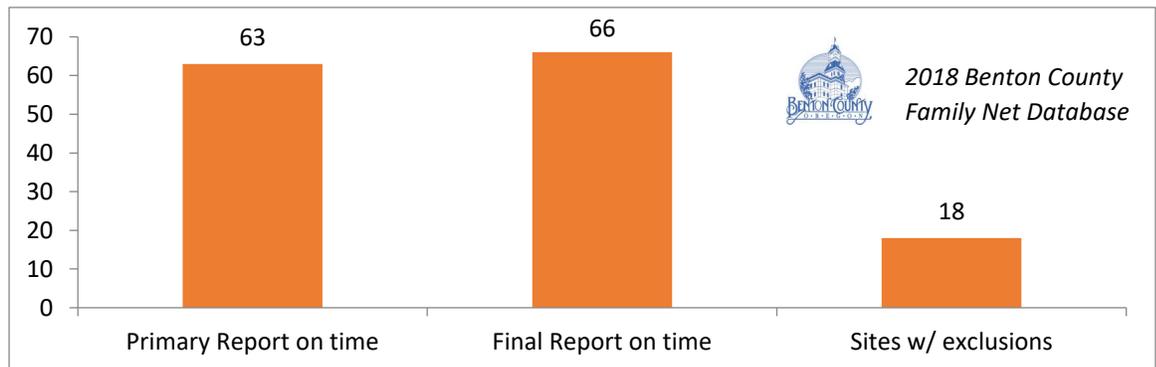
Percent of students who received letters who were ultimately excluded.



Of the 313 exclusion letters sent out in 2018, 35 students (11% of those who received a letter) were excluded from school. This percentage is similar to 2017 and 2016. In 2015, the percentage was a high outlier, possibly because the new online vaccination education system had a new and more extensive process for NMEs.

Schools, Student Facilities, and Head Starts Timely Reporting

Number of public and private schools, childcare centers, and Head Starts



Public Schools: 84% of Primary review reports were turned in on time in 2018, similar to 2017. 97% of Final reports were turned in on time in 2018, up from 87% in 2017.

Private Schools: All private schools turned in Primary and Final reports on time in 2018. In 2017, 71% of Primary reports and 72% of Final reports were turned in on time.

Student Facilities and Head Starts: 84% of Primary review reports were turned in on time in 2018, up from 79% in 2017. 69% of Final reports were turned in on time, down from 73% in 2017.

OVERALL:

62 of 72 sites (86%) of all sites turned in their Primary reports on time in 2018, up from 79% in 2017.

65 of 72 sites (90%) of all sites turned in their Final reports on time in 2018, up from 79% in 2017.