



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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## **WHOOPING COUGH CASE REPORTED AT LOCAL SCHOOL** *Pertussis Immunizations Work to Prevent Disease*

A 5-year-old child at a San Diego area school diagnosed with whooping cough brings the total number of cases to 426 for the region in 2011, County Health and Human Services Agency officials said today. No cases have been reported yet for 2012.

The student was up-to-date with immunizations and attends Kate Sessions Elementary School in the San Diego Unified School District. Health officials note that this number is not the year-end total for pertussis in 2011 because more cases from last year may get reported through the month of January.

“Resolve to protect your children from vaccine-preventable diseases with regularly scheduled immunizations,” said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. “Pertussis is a highly contagious disease and can be fatal to unimmunized infants.”

In 2010, a record 1,144 cases were reported in San Diego County, including two infant deaths.

Parents can obtain the vaccine series and the Tdap booster shot for their children through their primary care physicians. Students who are not covered by a medical insurance plan can get the shot from a local retail pharmacy for a fee, or from a County Public Health center.

A typical case of pertussis starts with a cough and runny nose for one to two weeks, followed by weeks to months of rapid coughing fits that sometimes end with a whooping sound. Fever, if present, is usually mild. The disease is treatable with antibiotics.

For more information about whooping cough and ongoing vaccination clinics, call the HHS Immunization Branch at (866) 358-2966, or visit [www.sdiz.org](http://www.sdiz.org).

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