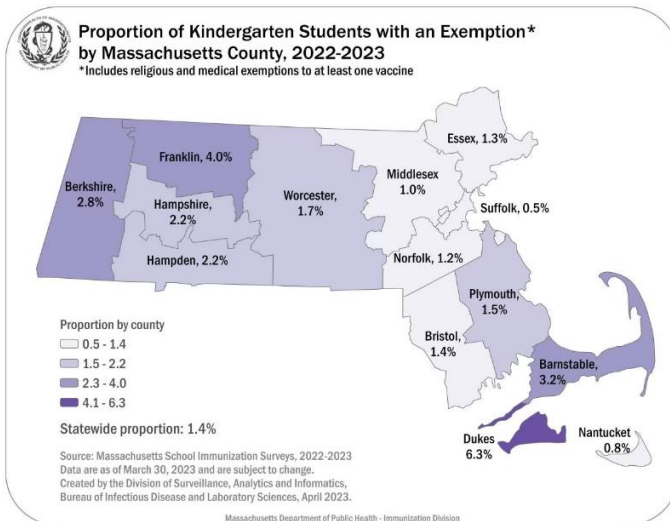
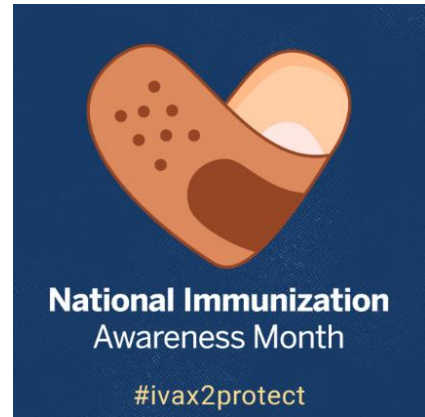


## National Immunization Awareness Month

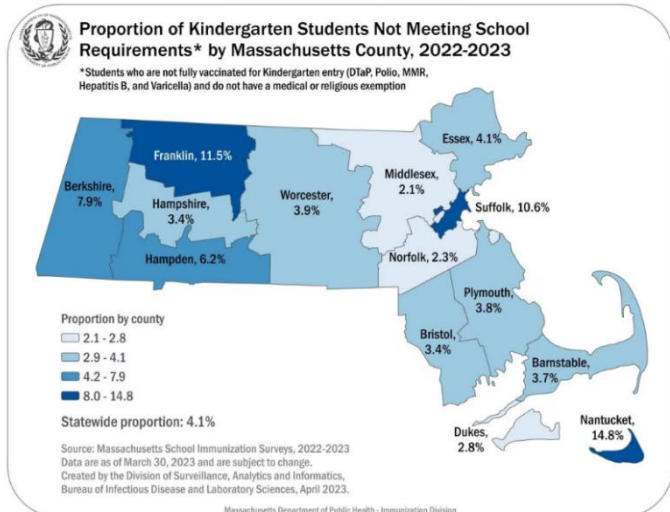
August is National Immunization Awareness Month. National Immunization Awareness Month is an annual observed to highlight the importance of routine vaccinations for people of all ages.

We continue to work with Academic Public Health Corps (APHC) to create health education materials each month. We have posted the attached fliers on our website ([www.gbph.org](http://www.gbph.org)) and the social media post on our Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook accounts.

Vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. In the United States, vaccines have greatly reduced infectious diseases that once routinely caused severe illness and death, including smallpox and polio. Despite this, global vaccination has plateaued within the last decade. To learn more about how vaccines can help prevent disease, and current vaccine recommendations, [click here](#).



School immunization rates provide insight into the vaccine coverage in communities across the state. The map to the right shows the proportion of kindergarten student with an exemption, which includes religious and medical exemptions to at least one of the required vaccines. Across the state, exemption rates and those not meeting school requirements are fairly low. In Worcester County, we have a 1.7% exemption rate, compared to the statewide proportion of 1.4%. In addition, Worcester County has a low rate of kindergarten students not meeting school requirements. This data is based on the 2022-2023 MA School Immunization Survey. For more information about childhood vaccines, [click here](#).



During NIAM, we encourage you to talk to your doctor, nurse or healthcare provider to ensure you and your family are protected against serious diseases by getting caught up on routine vaccination.

## Community Health Equity Initiative Survey

The Community Health Equity Survey (CHES) aims to help communities address barriers to health. Taking the survey is easy. Just [click here](#) or visit the website [www.mass.gov/resource/community-health-equity-initiative](http://www.mass.gov/resource/community-health-equity-initiative) to get started.