

# IMMUNIZATIONS

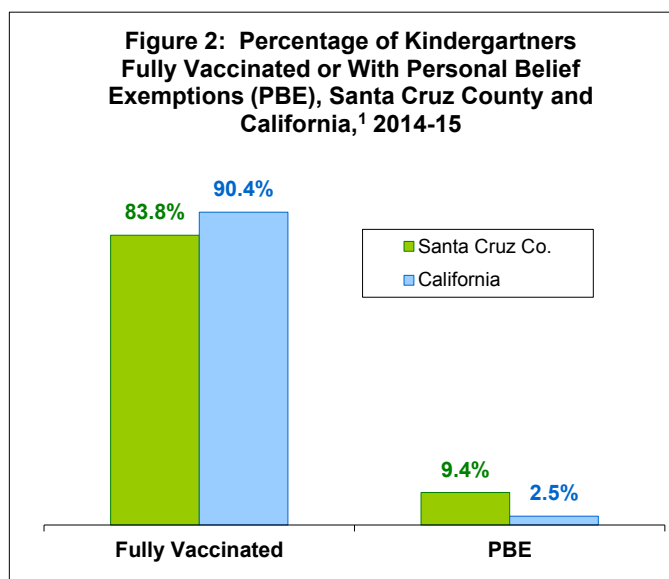
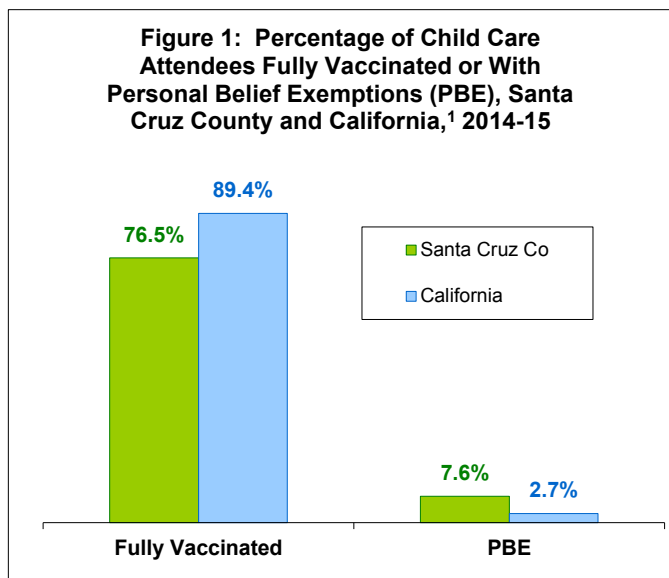
Vaccines prevent disease both directly, in the people who receive them, and indirectly, by reducing the number of infected people who could otherwise transmit infection. Vaccines are responsible for the control of many infectious diseases that were once common in this country. High vaccination coverage in children by age 2 has resulted in historically low levels of most vaccine-preventable diseases in the United States; coverage must be maintained to reduce the burden of disease and prevent a resurgence of these diseases, particularly in populations with lower vaccination coverage.

In the fall of 2014, 89.4% of children entering licensed child care in California were fully immunized, compared to 76.5% of Santa Cruz County children ages 2 years to 4 years, 11 months (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> In Santa Cruz County, 7.6% of attendees (versus 2.7% statewide) were not fully vaccinated because of a personal belief exemption (PBE); the remainder were either conditional entrants (in process to be fully vaccinated but not yet having all required vaccinations) or permanent medical exemptions. Also, only one-third of children in this age group are estimated to attend child care centers, so the data does not represent the entire population of children in this age group.

Among kindergartners, 90.4% had received all required immunizations statewide in the fall of 2014, compared to 83.8% in Santa Cruz County (Figure 2).<sup>2</sup> The difference is due to PBE rates – 9.4% in Santa Cruz County in 2014, compared to 2.5% statewide. Within Santa Cruz County, PBE rates vary greatly by school; Reference 2 provides school-specific rates. Parents considering exemptions for their children should be aware of the risk for disease both for their children and the public.

## CALIFORNIA SENATE BILL 277

On June 30, 2015, California Governor Jerry Brown signed a bill that removes all exemptions to vaccine requirements for school entry except those medically indicated. Brown asserted, “The science is clear that vaccines dramatically protect children against a number of infectious and dangerous diseases.” The law applies to any public or private school. Kindergartners who were PBE's prior to the law’s implementation will be “grandfathered in,” and they will not be required to be vaccinated until 7th grade when immunizations are assessed.



<b>Sources</b>	(1) California Department of Public Health. 2014-15 Child Care Immunization Assessment Results. <a href="http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/2014-15%20CA%20Child%20Care%20Immunization%20Assessment.pdf">http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/2014-15%20CA%20Child%20Care%20Immunization%20Assessment.pdf</a> .
	(2) California Department of Public Health. 2014-15 Kindergarten Immunization Assessment Results. <a href="http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/ImmunizationLevels.aspx">http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Pages/ImmunizationLevels.aspx</a> .
	(3) Forbes. "California Vaccination Bill SB277 Signed by Governor, Becomes Law."