



AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IDEAS GET YOUR COMMUNITY INVOLVED!

[National Immunization Awareness Week \(NIAW\)](#) is held annually in late April. It's an opportunity to focus the attention of Canadians on the importance of vaccinations for all ages. Members of the [Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion \(CCIAP\)](#) will be spreading the word at the national level. However, for this weeklong campaign to be successful, we need the support of your community to get the message out to the grassroots.

NIAW coincides with [Vaccination Week in the Americas](#), organized by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), during which countries in North, Central and South America will encourage parents, caregivers, and health care providers to ensure children and adults are immunized.

PREPARE

- Form a volunteer steering committee for National Immunization Awareness Week within your organization.
- Assess the needs of your community. What programs are already in place to promote immunization? Define your goals for NIAW. Set objectives that can be evaluated after it's all over.
- Develop messages for your two main target audiences: parents/caregivers and health care providers. CCIAP will have a sample community media release and key messages available for annual campaigns at [immunize.ca](#).
- Drawing on your objectives and key messages, develop information materials on immunization in your community and nationally. National resources are available at [immunize.ca](#).
- Assign one or more people to be "media spokespersons".

ACT

Here are a few suggestions to help you reach your intended audience:

Media

Submit news releases, opinion (op-ed) pieces and letters to the editor focusing on your key messages. Contact journalists, editors and producers with story ideas and people to interview. Check [immunize.ca](#) for examples of [radio ads](#) and [press releases](#).

Local Government

Ask your mayor or city/town council to proclaim National Immunization Awareness Week. A [sample proclamation](#) is available on CCIAP's website. If you are successful, encourage your mayor and medical officer of health to hold a news conference to get NIAW off to a good start. To support City Hall, provide municipal offices with copies of your information kits on immunization.

Local Businesses

- Enlist the support of your local business association for National Immunization Awareness Week.
- Put up posters in shop windows.
- Seek corporate sponsorship for newspaper ads, radio announcements, and other publicity material. Stores that focus on children can provide special access to parents and caregivers. They may also be more willing to provide financial or in-kind support.
- Ask stores to give discounts with proof of immunization.

Schools

- Enlist the support of local school boards to promote NIAW with principals and teachers. Use materials from the school-based [National Immunization Poster Contest](#) (held every two years in conjunction with the Canadian Immunization Conference), available on the CCIAP website.
- Ask teachers if you can speak to their classes about immunization as part of the curriculum for health or science.
- Download and distribute the [CCIAP colouring book](#) or the [20 Questions](#) immunization quiz and its companion resource [Understanding the Answers](#).
- Ask a local college health education, marketing, or communications department to conduct a community survey and release the results during NIAW.

Social Service Agencies

- Distribute promotional and educational materials to shelters, community centres, daycare centres and other child-oriented agencies.

Service Clubs and Faith Communities

- Invite service clubs to get involved by raising funds or holding promotional events. Rotary International is a major supporter of international immunization programs.
- Speak to staff at programs for children in foster care, refugees/recent immigrants, persons with chronic diseases, shelters for the homeless, and seniors' residences.
- Ask local religious leaders to include messages about disease prevention in their sermons and prayers, and to include information about NIAW in their bulletins.

Libraries

- Be sure your local library has a copy of the third edition of *Your Child's Best Shot*, published by the [Canadian Paediatric Society](#).
- Organize a "story hour" at your local library where seniors can share stories about diseases when they were young. There may be a local branch of March of Dimes or a post-polio support group that may have willing spokespeople who have dealt with polio.

Health Care Providers

- Hold educational events or open houses at local hospitals, colleges, clinics, public health units, community health centres and CLSCs.

Employers

- Ask employers to include a flyer with their payroll stubs, or an article in their staff newsletter.

EVALUATE

After NIAW, assess your activities.

- How many participants took part in your community's activities?
- What were the challenges?
- What resources will be required for NIAW next year?

Recommendations for next year will be important to you and the Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness & Promotion, so please let us know.

SUCCESS STORIES & IDEAS

collected from a variety of health organizations

Displays:

- Information booth/kiosk or display in hospital/health care facility/public health unit
- Information display at big-box stores or malls
- Poster and/or pamphlet distribution in schools, libraries, or community centres
- Advertising campaign in public transit (bus, subway, train)
- Promote NIAW on staff uniforms (fleece vests, etc.)

Clinics:

- Clinic days for immunizations (e.g. adult Td clinic pre-gardening session)
- Distribution of immunization resources during adult and baby clinics

Special Events:

- Preschool health fair
- Kindergarten health fair for children to receive their booster
- Local conference for immunization

Contests

- Colouring contest in schools and local child care facilities to promote childhood immunization and reporting of vaccines to public health
- Prizes for improved immunization rates in a community
- Prize draws for public health nurses who promoted immunization awareness in their district
- Photographs of each person immunized for display; draw for prizes of those photographed

Education:

- "Lunch and learn" sessions, with experts around a particular immunization theme (e.g. sessions for nurses regarding parents' concerns around immunization or a review of the current immunization schedule and what's new)
- "Did you know?" series of e-mails to employees
- "Test your VAQ" (vaccine awareness quotient) with health care providers
- Handouts in new-mom packages or visits to prenatal classes
- Visits to parent groups to discuss the importance of immunization for the whole family, including grandparents

Community Media:

- Articles on immunization topics written by local experts (e.g. myths and facts, herd immunity)
- Survey of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs for publication in local newspapers
- Promotion of tetanus immunization to gardeners, in preparation for spring gardening
- Distributed local press releases with pro-immunization messaging
- Radio and community-channel public service announcements
- Ads and articles in staff newsletters, parent newsletters

Online Promotion/Social Media:

- Badges or banner ads on blogs and community websites directly linked to credible information sources such as immunize.ca
- NIAW information in e-mail signature block (using CCIAP's [NIAW logo](#))
- Blog post or e-newsletter article about NIAW and/or immunization topic
- Facebook posts about NIAW
- Twitter posts about NIAW

Add your success story. Send it to immunize@cpha.ca !