

New PSA Reminds College Students That Vaccination is the Best Form of Protection Against Dangerous Flu Virus

College Population's Low Vaccination Rates, High-Touch Living Spaces Pose Increased Risk

KING OF PRUSSIA, PA, November 24, 2014 — Although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone six months of age and older get a flu vaccine every season,¹ college-aged adults have documented vaccination rates of just 8 to 30 percent.^{2,3,4,5} To help educate this vulnerable group and encourage vaccination, a collaboration of flu stakeholders launched a new [Public Service Announcement \(PSA\)](#) to broach a serious topic with college-aged adults. bioCSL Inc. has partnered on the PSA with Families Fighting Flu and Alana's Foundation, two nonprofit organizations of families who have lost children to, or whose children have suffered serious health complications due to the flu, that work to increase vaccination rates.

College students are at a particularly high risk of getting and spreading the flu because of exposure to high-touch areas like common living spaces and classrooms, and through social activities. Flu vaccination is associated with reductions in illness, use of health care services, and work and school absenteeism, and a lower risk for impaired academic performance.⁵ The new PSA reminds this vulnerable population to get vaccinated.

The PSA was inspired by research showing that college students' parents are key influencers in their decision to get a flu vaccine.⁶ "A recommendation from someone is the biggest reason college students get a flu vaccine, and mom's voice is one of the most influential they hear," said Dr. Charles Altman, Head of U.S. Medical Affairs at bioCSL Inc. "We hope this campaign will be one more reminder to college students of what mom and public health officials are already telling them – that a flu vaccine is the best form of protection against this dangerous disease."

The PSA follows Seth, a college student whose mom shadows him throughout his daily routine. As Seth prepares for a big night out, mom shakes off some of his bad habits, but when his date appears at the door with the sniffles, mom puts her foot down, asking Seth, "Did you get your flu vaccine?"

[Seasonal influenza](#) is a serious, contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. Approximately 5 to 20 percent of Americans get the flu each year, more than 200,000 are hospitalized, and tens of thousands die from flu-related complications. The flu is transmitted via respiratory droplets spread through coughing, sneezing and talking. Flu can also be contracted by touching a surface or object that has the flu virus on it, and then touching the mouth, eyes or nose. Getting the flu vaccine is the best protection against the flu.^{7,8}

Laura Scott, Executive Director of Families Fighting Flu, commented: "Family members can play an important role in the health of their loved ones. A simple reminder can be the difference between a successful school year and a trip to the hospital."

"As college students, it's easy to feel invincible – like we'll never get sick," added 18-year-old Nicholas Yaksich, brother to Alana Yaksich of Alana's Foundation. "My family learned firsthand the dangers of flu,

and we're committed to educating others that vaccination is the best way to protect themselves and their family members from the flu."

Watch the PSA and share it with a college student you know on [YouTube](#). Visit <http://vaccine.healthmap.org> to find where you can get a flu vaccination in your area.

About bioCSL

bioCSL Inc., which is based in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, is the United States subsidiary of CSL Limited (ASX:CSL), a Melbourne, Australia-based company that employs more than 12,000 people in 27 countries. bioCSL is a leading provider of essential vaccines, pharmaceuticals and diagnostic reagents, and for over 50 years, has manufactured seasonal and pandemic influenza vaccines. It operates one of the world's largest influenza vaccine manufacturing facilities in Australia, and maintains fill and finish facilities in the United States and Germany for the timely and reliable supply of influenza vaccines to global markets. Today, bioCSL's influenza vaccine is registered in 29 countries. bioCSL also specializes in the production of antivenoms and is the world's only producer of Q Fever vaccine. Visit bioCSL Inc. at www.biocsl-us.com.

About Families Fighting Flu

[Families Fighting Flu](#) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) volunteer-based advocacy organization dedicated to protecting the lives of children. Our organization includes families whose children have suffered serious medical complications or died from influenza, as well as other advocates and health care practitioners committed to flu prevention. In honor of our children, we work to increase awareness about the seriousness of the disease and to reduce the number of childhood hospitalizations and deaths caused by the flu each year by increasing vaccination rates.

About Alana's Foundation

Alana's Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and was created in memory of Alana Yaksich by her loving family and friends. The mission of Alana's Foundation is to educate the public about the importance of yearly influenza vaccinations and in doing so, increase vaccination rates by providing convenient and affordable flu vaccination options as well as provide support for families that have lost a child. For more information visit www.alanasfoundation.org or www.facebook.com/AlanasFoundation.

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¹ CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) Recommends Universal Annual Influenza Vaccination. Press release. February 24, 2010. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/media/pressrel/2010/r100224.htm>. Accessed September 30, 2014.

² Michigan Care Improvement Registry. Timely Immunization Practice Strategies. June 6, 2014. Available at: <http://www.mcir.org/region-2/PDF/Kent/KentTipsVFC.pdf>. Accessed September 30, 2014.

³ Katherine A. Poehling, Jill Blocker, Edward H. Ip, Timothy R. Peters, Mark Wolfson. 2009–2010 Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Coverage Among College Students From 8 Universities in North Carolina. *Journal of American College Health*, 2012; 60 (8): 541 DOI: [10.1080/07448481.2012.700973](https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2012.700973)

⁴ Yang, Z. J. (2012), Too Scared or Too Capable? Why Do College Students Stay Away from the H1N1 Vaccine?. *Risk Analysis*, 32: 1703–1716. DOI: [10.1111/j.1539-6924.2012.01799.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1539-6924.2012.01799.x)

⁵ Kristin L. Nichol, MD, MPH, MBA; Sarah D'Heilly, MD, MPH; Edward P. Ehlinger, MD, MSPH. Influenza Vaccination Among College and University Students Impact on Influenza-like Illness, Health Care Use, and Impaired School Performance. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*. 2008;162(12):1113-1118. DOI:[10.1001/archpedi.162.12.1113](https://doi.org/10.1001/archpedi.162.12.1113).

⁶ Brendan Nyhan, Ph.D., Jason Reifler, Ph.D., Sean Richey, Ph.D. The Role of Social Networks in Influenza Vaccine Attitudes and Intentions Among College Students in the Southeastern United States. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 2012. DOI: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22921143>

⁷ Seasonal Flu. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at: http://www.flu.gov/about_the_flu/seasonal/index.html. Accessed September 30, 2014.

⁸ Key Facts about Influenza (Flu) & Flu Vaccine. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm>. Accessed September 30, 2014.