



Parent Teacher Awareness
Educating About Adolescent Meningitis Prevention
A National Meningitis Association Call to Action Program

[COPY ONTO YOUR PTA'S OR SCHOOL'S LETTERHEAD]

SAMPLE PARENT/STUDENT LETTER

[INSERT DATE]

Dear Parent/Student:

[I or INSERT NAME OF PTA] [have/has] joined the National Meningitis Association (NMA) to inform [middle/high] school students and parents in our community about a potentially deadly bacterial infection that strikes adolescents and young adults, called meningococcal disease.

Meningococcal disease, commonly known as meningitis, strikes up to 3,000 Americans each year. Adolescents and young adults have an increased rate of contracting meningococcal disease compared to the general population, accounting for nearly 30 percent of all U.S. cases annually. According to one study, as many as one out of every four adolescents infected with the disease may die. Of those who survive, up to 20 percent endure long-term disabilities, including brain damage, hearing loss, kidney disease and limb amputations.

Though rare, the disease comes on quickly and can cause death or permanent disability within hours. The disease is often misdiagnosed, since early symptoms can resemble the flu.

[INSERT NAME OF PTA] and NMA want you to be aware of meningococcal disease and the availability of a vaccine to protect against the disease. Vaccination can help protect against the majority of meningococcal disease cases occurring among adolescents and young adults.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends meningococcal immunization for all adolescents 11 through 18 years of age.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved a new meningococcal conjugate vaccine for use among persons aged 11 to 55 years, which is expected to provide long-term protection against meningococcal disease. Immunization is the most effective means of preventing the disease.

Enclosed is [INSERT MATERIALS ENCLOSED; i.e. fact sheet, NMA brochure] with information about meningococcal disease, vaccination and public health officials' recommendations.

The [INSERT NAME OF PTA] is a child advocacy organization of parents, educators, students and other citizens active in the [INSERT SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY]. We encourage you to learn more about meningococcal disease and prevention and speak to your child's physician about immunization.

NMA, a national nonprofit organization, was founded by parents whose children died or live with permanent disabilities from meningococcal disease. NMA is dedicated to educating the public about the dangers of meningococcal disease and available prevention approaches. For more information about the National Meningitis Association, please visit their Web site at www.nmaus.org.

Sincerely,
[INSERT NAME AND TITLE, I.E. DISTRICT PTA PRESIDENT]