



# VOICES OF MENINGITIS™

A Meningococcal Disease Prevention Campaign  
from the National Association of School Nurses

In collaboration with sanofi pasteur



## Tips on How to Raise Meningococcal Vaccination Awareness in Your Community

There are many ways you can get involved in the *Voices of Meningitis Challenge* and help educate students and parents within your school and community about the dangers of meningococcal disease and the importance of vaccination.

The following guide offers tips on ways you can use the *Voices of Meningitis* campaign resources that are available on the *Voices Challenge* webpage on [www.NASN.org](http://www.NASN.org).

*Voices of Meningitis* educational materials can also be ordered hard-copy free of charge at [www.VoicesOfMeningitis.org](http://www.VoicesOfMeningitis.org). New materials will continuously be added, so check the Web site regularly.

### Suggested Ideas for *Voices Challenge* Awareness Activities

#### Parent Packages and Mailings:

- Share educational materials with students for them to take home to parents during key times of year, such as late-winter and early-spring when disease incidence peaks, when students leave for summer break, or when students return to school, to be sure they are up-to-date with vaccinations
- Add a parent letter to an existing school mailing. You can include the brochure, if you'd like
- Place the *Voices of Meningitis* sticker on the next report card mailing or other school announcements or flyers
- Work with your athletic department to do spring, fall, or winter sports immunization reminders; include a brochure, fact sheet, and parent letter in sports registration packets or distribute with sports physical forms

#### Poster and Video Displays:

- Display posters in high traffic areas to draw attention to the issue, raise awareness and encourage parents and students to seek vaccination. Good areas to display are:
  - School entrance(s)
  - School nurse's office
  - Cafeteria
  - Gymnasium door and locker rooms
  - Near restrooms and water fountains
  - Club or activity bulletin boards
- Post the *Voices of Meningitis* videos on your school's Web site for parents to view; write a note saying to contact you or their child's health-care provider with questions
- Share the *Voices of Meningitis* videos with health teachers to show during class or provide them for airings on the school's closed-circuit TV channel

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## Presentations and Meetings:

- Work with the Parent Teacher Association or Organization (PTA or PTO) to host a presentation about the dangers of meningitis and importance of vaccination for preteens and teens using the template PowerPoint Presentation. You can use this time to distribute other meningitis educational materials
- Reserve time during a school assembly, pep rally, or health class to discuss meningitis and vaccination. You can share educational materials with students and air the *Voices of Meningitis* PSA or other videos
- Set up a table at a school open house, back-to-school night, homecoming game, pep rallies, or other school sporting events, and distribute the brochure and fact sheet to help raise awareness and answer questions about meningitis vaccination
- Reserve time on meeting agendas for upcoming local school nurse meetings or conferences and use the presentation for school nurses, which includes speaker notes, to provide peers with information about *Voices of Meningitis* and how they can raise awareness within their schools and communities



## E-mails and Newsletters:

- Use the template newsletter article in an upcoming issue of the school newspaper or newsletter
- Send the template e-mail through your school's Honeywell or Voicemail Alert System or LISTSERV
- Send your local PTA or PTO the template e-mail to help raise awareness of meningitis and encourage parents to discuss meningitis vaccination with their child's health-care provider

## Immunization Reminder:

- Look up your students' immunization records and send a mailing to parents who have not had their children vaccinated against meningitis. Send them the parent letter with a fact sheet or brochure
  - Work with your local public health department or vaccine provider to host an immunization clinic to "catch-up" students

## Announcements:

- Work with your school principal to deliver a loudspeaker announcement directly to students about meningitis prevention
  - Be sure to note that additional educational materials for parents and students are available in your office



## Online and Social Media:

- Include a link from your school's Web site to [VoicesOfMeningitis.org](http://VoicesOfMeningitis.org) using the program's widget icon
- Post on your or your school's Facebook page about the importance of meningococcal vaccination for preteens and teens. A sample post is available at [VoicesOfMeningitis.org](http://VoicesOfMeningitis.org)
- Include a tweet on Twitter about the importance of meningitis vaccination for preteens and teens and link to [VoicesOfMeningitis.org](http://VoicesOfMeningitis.org)

## Word-of-Mouth:

- Talk to parents about meningitis prevention any chance you get (eg, one-on-one visits, parent nights, health and college fairs, etc.)
- Talk to your fellow school nurses about the campaign and what you have been doing to raise your "voice" against meningitis; give them suggestions too

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### Putting the *Voices Challenge* into Practice

See how other school nurses took on the *Voices of Meningitis Challenge* in 2010 and won a trip to this year's NASN Annual Conference in Washington, DC:

#### ✓ **Rebecca L. Vogt, RNC, BSN, NASN - Claypool, IN**

*Rebecca identified students in her school that had not received the meningitis vaccine through the state's immunization registry program. Once identified, Rebecca sent 3 different mailings to parents using the Voices of Meningitis parent letter and worked with other nurses in the area to arrange vaccination clinics at each high school in the district. Rebecca also visited individual classrooms at her school to talk about the warning signs and symptoms of the disease.*

#### ✓ **Christine Chapman, RN - Hazelwood, MO**

*Christine aired the Voices of Meningitis videos and distributed educational materials during internal school meetings and health fairs. She also spoke with school nurses in the district and encouraged them to educate their students and parents about the disease, and provided them with educational materials to help aid in their awareness efforts. Christine made a "portable educational kit," which included Voices of Meningitis posters and brochure, as well a "mascot" she created using the campaign pin and a stuffed bear.*

#### ✓ **Georgene C. Westendorf, RN, BSN, NCSN, MPH - Oklahoma City, OK**

*Georgene gave a presentation during a local PTA meeting to help educate parents about meningitis and encourage vaccination while receiving the Tdap immunization, which is required for all students in her state entering seventh grade beginning fall of 2011. She also distributed educational materials to parents and aired the Voices of Meningitis videos during parent-teacher conferences. Georgene worked with other nurses in the district to contact the local public health department and Blue Cross Blue Shield to set up immunization clinics at schools in her district.*

#### ✓ **Adalia Del Bosque, RN, BSN - McAllen, TX**

*Adalia brought the national "Vaccinate Before you Graduate" campaign to her school during its college night to help reinforce a new state requirement for all incoming college freshmen who will be residing in a dormitory to show proof of vaccination against meningococcal disease. During the night, Adalia offered Voices of Meningitis educational information about meningococcal disease to parents and students, as well as the opportunity for her high school students to get vaccinated.*

#### ✓ **Carrie A. Clarke, RN - Sioux Falls, SD**

*Carrie started her awareness activities by wearing the "Ask me about Voices of Meningitis" pin on a lanyard to work every day, which, in turn, prompted many questions and provided Carrie with an opportunity to educate anyone who approached her about the disease and importance of vaccination. In addition, Carrie sent various parent mailings sending the parent letter and fact sheets with seventh and eighth grade report cards. Carrie also used the parent PowerPoint presentation during 3 evenings of parent-teacher conferences.*

NASN encourages you to raise your "voice" for meningitis prevention—together we can help protect preteens and teens from this devastating disease! No awareness effort is too small to highlight on a "*Voices Challenge Submission Form*" and all entries will be recognized.