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## Mahoning County District Board of Health

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### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TUBERCULIN SKIN TESTING OF STUDENTS AND SCHOOL EMPLOYEES IN MAHONING COUNTY

1. Universal tuberculin skin testing of schoolchildren as a public health measure is no longer an effective method of detecting or preventing cases of childhood tuberculosis. Of 6,258 kindergarteners and 7<sup>th</sup> graders in the Youngstown City School District screened between 1994 and 2001, only 21 (0.3%) had positive tuberculin skin tests. Nine of these 21 students (43%) were born outside the United States. The Youngstown City School District discontinued mandatory screening of kindergartners and 7<sup>th</sup> graders in the 2002-2003 school year at the recommendation of the Tuberculosis Control Unit of the District Board of Health.
2. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and American Academy of Pediatrics encourage targeted tuberculin skin testing of high risk children. Children born in countries with a higher rate of tuberculosis have a much higher risk of acquiring tuberculosis infection than children born in the United States. This risk diminishes the longer a foreign-born child resides in the U.S.
3. **The District Board of Health advises Mahoning County school districts to refer new students of any age for tuberculin skin testing if a student has lived in the U.S. less than five years and has not previously been tested.** Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.71 requires that all positive skin tests be reported promptly to the District Board of Health.
4. School employees, including teachers and bus drivers, are not at increased risk of tuberculosis infection. Ohio law no longer requires tuberculin skin testing of teachers, bus drivers, or other school employees. **The District Board of Health recommends that Mahoning County school districts eliminate all requirements for tuberculin skin testing of school employees except for new employees who have lived in the United States less than five years and have not previously been tested.**
5. Tuberculin skin tests can be administered by the District Board of Health at no charge or by family physicians. For more information about tuberculosis screening, contact the District Board of Health at 330-744-4246 or [TB@mahoninghealth.org](mailto:TB@mahoninghealth.org).

#### References:

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- (8) American Academy of Pediatrics. Red Book: 2006 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases. 27<sup>th</sup> ed.
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