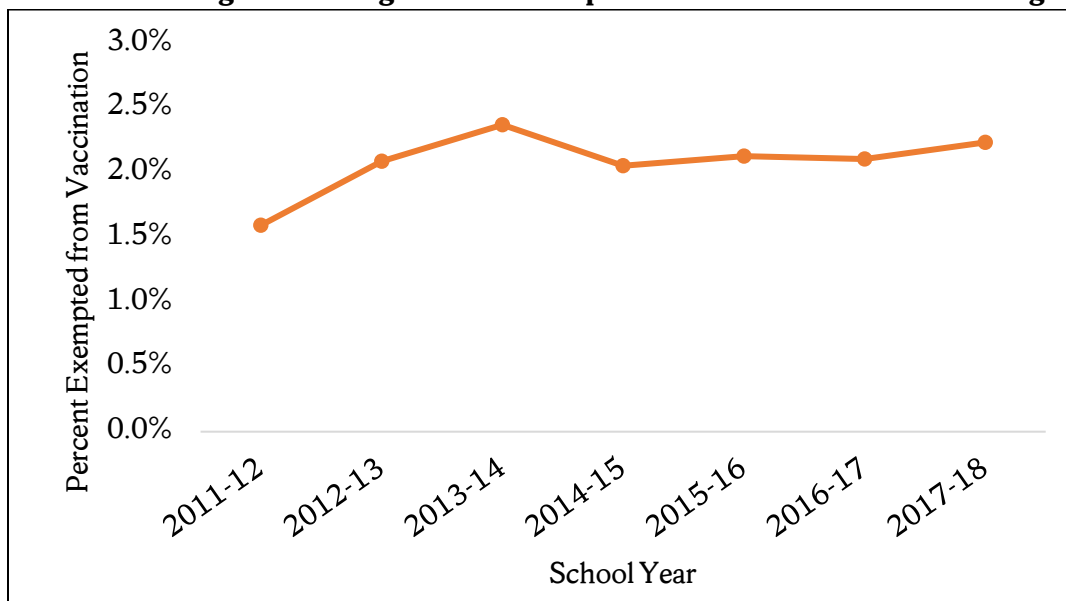


## More Kindergarteners are Exempted from Required School Vaccinations than in the Past

Kent Jason G. Cheng

Measles cases in the U.S. have soared over the past two years. After ending 2018 with 372 measles cases, 206 cases were reported in the first two months of 2019 alone. Outbreaks like these are mostly occurring in communities with low childhood vaccination rates. Parents are required by law to vaccinate their children before they go to kindergarten except when the student has medical issues or when states allow exemptions for religious or philosophical reasons. [Twenty states](#) have proposed new vaccination exemption bills already in 2019. The percentage of kindergarteners being granted exemption from vaccination is growing across the U.S. as parents increasingly request exemptions for philosophical reasons. During the 2017-18 school year, 2.2% of kindergarteners were exempted from vaccination. This is up from 1.6% during the 2011-12 school year. These percentages seem small, but in 2017-2018, this was equivalent to 81,000 children not receiving vaccines. Increases in the number of unvaccinated children dramatically raise the risk of more measles outbreaks.

**The Percentage of Kindergarteners Exempted from Vaccinations is Growing**



Data Source: SchoolVaxView via the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/coverage/schoolvaxview/data-reports/index.html>).

Data are not available for IL, MN, and MS. CO, TX, and WY had incomplete data points. Analysis: Kent Jason Cheng.

### About the Author

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