



From the Director Dr. Jonathan Mermin



In June, I wrote about the crisis at [the intersection of opioids and infectious diseases](#). In order to reduce overdose deaths and prevent transmission of new infections, we need to maximize use of tools proven to work. [Syringe services programs \(SSPs\)](#) offer a range of interventions, including access to sterile injection equipment. CDC released new materials about SSPs for health departments and partners that include:

- A summary outlining the safety and effectiveness of SSPs on reducing viral hepatitis and HIV;
- A fact sheet on ways SSPs can prevent transmission of blood-borne infections, help stop substance use, prevent overdose deaths through distribution of naloxone, and support public safety;
- An [infographic](#) that describes what SSPs are and what they do; and
- Frequently asked questions and answers about SSPs.

Nearly 30 years of research shows that SSPs are safe, effective, and reduce health care costs. Yet many communities threatened by the opioid crisis do not yet have a SSP in place. These materials can assist communities and public health partners as they work to create and expand SSPs in their area.

Nationwide Shortage of Tuberculin Skin Test Antigens

CDC expects a 3-to-10-month nationwide shortage of APLISOL® that began in June 2019. APLISOL® is one of two tuberculin antigens licensed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for tuberculin skin tests. CDC recommends three approaches to prevent a decrease in TB testing.

- Substitute interferon-gamma release assay (IGRA) blood tests for tuberculin skin tests (TSTs).
- Substitute TUBERSOL® for APLISOL® for skin testing.
- Prioritize allocation of TSTs, in consultation with state and local public health authorities. CDC recommends testing only [people who are at risk of TB](#).

You can monitor the status of this shortage at FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER)-Regulated Products: Current Shortages' [webpage](#).

Youth Connectedness and Adult Health Outcomes

According to the recent [CDC study](#) published in *Pediatrics*, youth who feel connected at school and home are less likely to experience certain negative health outcomes in adulthood. Connectedness refers to a sense of being cared for, supported, and belonging. These new findings suggest that increasing both school and family connectedness during adolescence can potentially have a powerful impact on health outcomes, including those related to mental health, sexual health, substance use, and violence, well into adulthood. To learn about this research, I invite you to visit CDC's healthy youth [website](#).



New from CDC

[Combating Congenital Syphilis in Louisiana: Going Beyond the Numbers to Save Babies' Lives](#)

[Gonococcal Isolate Surveillance Project \(GISP\) Profiles](#)

[National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention Epidemiologic and Economic Modeling Agreement \(NEEMA\) Web Tools](#)

[Surveillance Supplement: Diagnoses of HIV Infection among Adults and Adolescents in Metropolitan Statistical Areas United States and Puerto Rico, 2017](#)

Upcoming Events

[July 14-17: STD & HIV 2019 World Congress](#)

[July 21-24: 10th IAS Conference on HIV Science \(IAS 2019\)](#)

[July 28: World Hepatitis Day](#)

On the Web

[Medscape Commentary on Updated Tuberculosis Guidelines for Healthcare Workers](#)



[SPNS Journal Articles on Latinos and HIV Care Engagement](#)