

From: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <no-reply@emailupdates.cdc.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, June 29, 2022 9:00 AM

To:

Subject: A message for VFC providers from CDC Director Dr. Walensky

Dear colleague,

I would like to acknowledge the critical role your practice plays as a Vaccines for Children (VFC) provider and as a coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccination provider. Your dedication to keeping children safe and healthy is a gift not only to your patients and their families but also to the broader community. Thank you for all you and your staff have done during the COVID-19 pandemic, even while facing the stress, anxiety, and fear that many healthcare staff have experienced. The VFC program provider network serves as the backbone of the pediatric immunization program in the U.S., and we hope you are as proud to be a part of it as we are grateful for your participation.

I am writing to encourage your continued service to our nation's children, as 18 million between the ages of six months through four years are [now eligible](#) for COVID-19 vaccination. It is anticipated that these younger children will rely more heavily on their primary care providers for vaccination than older ones. Pharmacies and schools, which have played a substantial role in vaccinating children five years and older, are likely to play a smaller role in vaccinating those younger than five years. Thus, your help in ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 vaccination is critical. In addition, getting children vaccinated against COVID-19 in their medical homes provides an opportunity for them to receive routine childhood vaccination, routine screening, and recommended anticipatory guidance. As the most trusted source of information for parents and caregivers, your strong recommendation is critical to increasing confidence in COVID-19 vaccines and ensuring children get vaccinated.

Some important considerations for COVID-19 and routine vaccination include:

- Use every clinic visit as an opportunity to vaccinate. Well-child checks, Medicaid periodicity screenings, sports physicals, and other clinic visits all serve as opportunities for children to get COVID-19 vaccines and routine childhood vaccines that are due or were missed because of disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ensuring children are up to date with all recommended vaccines will be especially important as families prepare for children to return to school this fall.
- COVID-19 vaccine wastage may occur. You should take every opportunity to offer the COVID-19 vaccine to all eligible children. For example, do not hesitate to open a new vial, even at the end of a clinic day, to avoid missing an opportunity to vaccinate a child. It is understood that more doses could be left unused even when providers follow [best practices](#) to use every dose possible.
- Consider vaccinating children who are not current patients. If your practice can offer COVID-19 vaccination to children who are not current patients and might not have a medical home, please consider [enabling your location to be publicly displayed on vaccines.gov](#).
- Promote [v-safe, the after-vaccination health checker](#). Through short, smartphone-based surveys, parents and caregivers can tell CDC how their children feel after COVID-19 vaccination. Hang [v-safe posters](#) in your practice, distribute [v-safe information sheets](#), and recommend registering for v-safe during vaccination visits.
- Report COVID-19 vaccine supply levels at least weekly (by close of business on Fridays). Daily reporting was decreased to weekly on May 1, 2022, to help alleviate the burden on COVID-19 vaccine providers.

Please use and share the resources below to promote vaccination of children ages six months and older against COVID-19. Information about routine childhood vaccination is also included to help ensure that children are up to date with their routine vaccines.

- [Up-to-date information and resources](#) for jurisdictions, healthcare providers, pharmacists, schools, and community partners on planning COVID-19 vaccination of children.
- Resources about recommended [booster doses for everyone five years and older, if eligible](#).
- Resources to address [equity in childhood COVID-19 vaccination](#).
- [Resources to promote the COVID-19 vaccine for children & teens](#), including fact sheets, social media graphics, template newsletters, and links to [additional materials in multiple languages](#).
- Resources to [help vaccine providers answer questions](#) about COVID-19 vaccines.

- Information for parents and caregivers about [COVID-19 vaccines for children and teens](#), including [6 Things About the COVID-19 Vaccine for Children](#).
- COVID-19 vaccination [clinical and professional resources](#).
- Resources to encourage [routine childhood vaccination](#), including a [childhood vaccination communication toolkit](#) for clinicians.

If you have questions about pediatric COVID-19 vaccinations or routine vaccinations for pediatric populations, please contact your immunization program.

Thank you again for serving on the frontlines of this historic pandemic. Your work is truly appreciated as we strive to protect children and save lives.

Respectfully,

Rochelle P. Walensky, MD, MPH
Director, CDC



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