

'Vax to School' Vaccination Campaign - 2022

Key Messages:

Get Vaccinated Now

- The time to get your children and teens vaccinated is now! As the school year approaches, now is the time to make sure your child is up to date on all recommended vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines.
 - This includes young adults headed off to institutions of higher education, too!
- Children and teens can get COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines they need at the same visit.
- Getting vaccinated is an important tool to keep our students safe and healthy while they are in school.
- The pandemic has caused a number of disruptions in people's lives, and unfortunately many children and adolescents have fallen behind on getting recommended vaccines during the pandemic.
- Our kids deserve a worry-free, safe, and fun fall back in the classroom and participating in activities with friends. Taking easy steps like getting vaccinated will help ensure they can be healthy and active.
- Talk to your child's health care provider about what vaccines they need. You can also request your child's immunization record from the Minnesota Department of Health or download the Docket app to securely view your or your child's immunization record.

Healthy Children are Better Learners

- Vaccines are safe: They are carefully studied before they are recommended to be given to children and teens.
- Childhood diseases that were once common are rarely seen in the U.S. today because of the success of vaccinations. But diseases like measles, whooping cough, and others are extremely contagious and can make a child very sick. If children fall behind on vaccines, these diseases could make a comeback.
- Making sure your child has received all of their recommended vaccinations can help them stay healthy and avoid missing school or other activities. It also helps protect their classmates, teachers, and others from diseases.
- Schedule a check-up with your pediatrician to make sure your child is up to date on their vaccinations, and check-in on their physical, mental, and emotional health.
- Cost should not be a barrier to getting vaccinated. The COVID-19 vaccine is free and for other shots, the Minnesota Vaccines for Children (MnVFC) program provides free or low-cost shots to children (18 years of age and younger) who don't have insurance or whose insurance does not cover the cost of vaccines.

Children and Teens Are at Risk of COVID-19

- COVID-19 is still spreading in our communities. We have more tools available to us now—such as COVID-19 vaccines, testing, and medications—to help manage this disease, and it's important for us to continue using these and other strategies to keep COVID-19 from spreading, especially in our schools.
- Everyone age 6 months and older is now recommended to get vaccinated for COVID-19.

- COVID-19 can be serious for children, even children who do not have other underlying medical conditions, and we can't predict which children will get very sick. Vaccinations help keep children from getting very sick, hospitalized, or dying from COVID-19.
- Even with a mild case of COVID-19, children are still at risk of other long-term complications (e.g., "Long COVID," MIS-C), and can spread the virus to other people.
- Many children and teens are not up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines. Being up to date means your child has received all doses they are eligible for, including booster doses.
 - As of mid-July, only about 10% of children age 5-11 were up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines; only about 25% of children age 12-15 were up to date; and only about 30% of children age 16-17 were up to date.
- Getting children and teens vaccinated is critical to protecting their health and health of their classmates, teachers, and school staff.
- COVID-19 vaccine is free. Talk to your child's health care provider about getting your child vaccinated, or find COVID-19 vaccine locations near you.

Higher Education

- If your child is headed off to an institution of higher education this fall, make sure they are up to date on all of their vaccines, too!
- Young adults attending colleges, universities, or other institutions of higher education may need to show documentation that they have received certain vaccines or have a legal exemption.
- It's also important for them to make sure they are up to date on all recommended vaccines, including the COVID-19 vaccine. Diseases can spread easily on campus as students live and study in close quarters.
- Check out Minnesota's College Immunization Law's website, contact your health care provider, or contact your institution of higher education for more information on what vaccines they might need.