

Ministry of Health

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February 10, 2022

MEMO TO: Public Health Units, Hospitals, Pharmacies, Primary Care Providers and Provincial Paediatric Stakeholders

FROM: Dr. Kieran Moore
Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario

Alison Blair
Associate Deputy Minister, Pandemic Response and Recovery

SUBJECT: **Renewed Focus on vaccination for children ages 5-11**

Ontario has continued to make great progress in our COVID-19 vaccination campaign in the face of the Omicron variant, including expanding vaccine access to the 5-11 age cohort. As of February 9, 2022, nearly 55% of all Ontarian children aged 5-11 have received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, of which nearly 25% are fully vaccinated with two doses. While these numbers represent a great achievement in under three months, we believe there are opportunities to improve Ontario's total vaccination coverage for this age group.

It is our goal to ensure that parents, caregivers and legal guardians of children aged 5-11 feel well-informed and safe when consenting to immunize their children. The Ontario government is working to increase local vaccine uptake across the province by collaborating closely with public health units, primary care, clinical and community organizations, school boards and education partners to ensure all eligible Ontarians have access to first and second dose appointments and to address other barriers to vaccination.

Specifically, the Ministry of Health is focusing on targeted communications to support the vaccination of the 5-11 year-old population. We are reaching out to ask for your partnership during this week and beyond, to ensure we can reach as many parents, caregivers, legal guardians, and healthcare providers as possible with these important messages.

Alongside this, the Children's Health Coalition (CHC), in collaboration with the Hospital for Sick Children, is also launching a children's [vaccine confidence campaign](#), which will provide hesitant parents and caregivers with information to make an informed decision on immunizing their children aged 5-11. Parents, caregivers and children are also encouraged to call the Provincial Vaccine Confidence Line that can be accessed by calling the Provincial Vaccine

Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900, or visit [COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service](#) to book a confidential phone appointment with a SickKids clinician.

We are calling on all partners to activate their respective channels in support of the CHC and broader 5-11 vaccine communications efforts. In turn, we hope this will boost vaccine coverage, prevent severe COVID-19 outcomes in children, help to enable a return to normalcy, and support the overall health and wellbeing of our children and communities. Your support in the following ways would be greatly appreciated:

- Engage your key stakeholders and clients to share and promote information about vaccine safety and education
- Leverage provincial resources for information, to amplify and share, including our dedicated webpage Ontario.ca/covidvaccinekids, social media posts, fact sheet, poster, and the Children's Health Coalition toolkit (attached).

Finally, we welcome any feedback or recommendations you may have on how we can work together to ensure that parents, caregivers and legal guardians of children aged 5-11 have the information they need to make informed decisions about COVID-19 vaccination for children. Please contact covid.immunization@ontario.ca if you have any questions.

Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to protecting the health and well-being of Ontarians.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Dr. Kieran Moore
Chief Medical Officer of Health

Original signed by

Alison Blair
Associate Deputy Minister

CC: Dr. Catherine Zahn, Deputy Minister of Health, Ministry of Health (MOH)
Dr. Daniel Warshafsky, Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health, MOH
Tim Lewis, Assistant Deputy Minister, Vaccine Strategy, Implementation and Performance, MOH
Rhonda McMichael, Assistant Deputy Minister, Population Health Initiatives, MOH
Dr. Robin Williams, Special Advisor – COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout, MOH

Attachments:

- Ministry of Health Toolkit:
 - Ministry of Health's social media calendar (for awareness to amplify through your own social media channels or to use as a template to create your own posts)
 - Factsheet: COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Youth
 - Poster: COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Youth
- Children's Health Coalition Social Media Toolkit