

To: All Parents and Guardians of Children Aged Five to 11 in the Province of Ontario

Re: Ontario Children Aged Five to 11 Now Eligible to Receive Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine

I am pleased to be writing to you following Health Canada's approval of the paediatric Pfizer vaccine for children aged five to 11. This marks a tremendous milestone in Ontario's vaccination program and is a critical step forward in combating COVID-19.

The data is clear: vaccines are effective at preventing the spread of COVID-19 and reducing the severity of disease if one does become infected. Getting children vaccinated will provide them with a strong level of protection against COVID-19 and its variants. As we have witnessed with youth aged 12 and up, vaccines have been key to keeping schools open and safer for in-person learning and the activities they love. It will also help protect other family members, including younger children who cannot get vaccinated yet or older individuals who may have a lower immune response to the vaccines.

While over 85 percent of eligible Ontarians are now fully vaccinated, which has allowed the province to safely return to doing many of the things that we have missed over the course of the pandemic, children under 12 have not had the same access to the protection of the vaccine until now. Provincial data shows that school-aged children account for approximately one third of COVID-19 cases, highlighting the importance of vaccinating this age group. The paediatric Pfizer vaccine offered to children aged five to 11 is a lower dose than the adult formulation and is safe and effective at protecting this age group from COVID-19.

While children who get infected with COVID-19 typically experience mild symptoms, some can get very sick, require hospitalization, and experience serious and long-lasting symptoms. Vaccines will help protect kids from COVID-19, reducing disruptions to learning while allowing them to play, learn, and develop normally.

It is natural to have questions about the vaccine. Parents and caregivers with concerns can contact the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900 to receive more information from a health specialist.

Ontario is working with its public health partners to develop a multi-channel approach to make the vaccine as accessible as possible for this age group. Starting on November 23 at 8:00 a.m., vaccine appointments for children aged five to 11 can be booked through the [COVID-19 vaccination portal](#) or by calling the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre (1-833-943-3900), directly through public health units that use their own booking systems, through [participating pharmacies](#), and select primary care providers.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kieran Moore
Chief Medical Officer of Health