

December 10, 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians and Families,

On behalf of Interior Health, we are pleased to inform you that last week, public health began COVID-19 vaccination clinics for children aged 5 to 11. The response from families and communities has been overwhelmingly positive, with more than 10,000 scheduled appointments for children within this age group.

Many families have expressed how relieved and grateful they are to have their children vaccinated against COVID-19. We have also heard from families with questions about the vaccine, and how the provincial vaccine program works for children.

Parental or guardian consent is required for every child to get vaccinated for COVID-19. We would like to share the following information as you discuss COVID-19 vaccination with your family.

Vaccine effectiveness and safety

The COVID-19 vaccine for children is effective and safe. Clinical trials show the COVID-19 vaccine is 91% effective against preventing COVID-19 infections, and even better for preventing severe illness and hospitalization.

As with any other vaccine in Canada, the COVID-19 vaccine for children aged 5 to 11 has gone through a rigorous review and approval process, and no severe reactions were detected during clinical trials. We will continue to monitor the safety and effectiveness at the provincial and federal levels.

Why have your child vaccinated

While many children experience mild to moderate COVID-19 illness, some may get very sick and others can have lingering symptoms or health issues long after their infection. Vaccinating children helps reduce COVID-19 spread to others and disruptions to school and personal activities.

How to get your child vaccinated

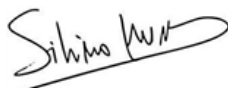
Register your child online at www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca to receive an invitation to book an appointment. For more information, please visit our IH webpage [COVID-19 vaccines for children 5 - 11](#). We also encourage you to speak with your child's health care provider if you have further questions about the vaccine.

Thank you for making an informed choice throughout the pandemic, in an effort to keep your family and community safe.

Sincerely,



Dr. Sue Pollock
Interim Chief Medical Health Officer



Dr. Silvina Mema
Medical Health Officer



Dr. Karin Goodison
Medical Health Officer



Dr. Shobhit Maruti
Medical Health Officer



Dr. Fatemeh Sabet
Medical Health Officer

We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate, and work together. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.