



May 11, 2021

Dear Parents,

You have faced many challenges and had to make a lot of difficult choices this year for the good of your kids. Be it deciding on an education model (in school vs. virtual or hybrid), or whether to allow participation in sports, social events and other activities, I'm sure you weighed these considerations with the ultimate goal of keeping your children as safe and healthy as possible.

That's exactly what DCHD is asking you to do regarding COVID-19 vaccinations. Just as you immunize your kids against other diseases, now comes the opportunity to do the same for protection from COVID-19. The Pfizer vaccine was initially authorized for emergency use on anyone age 16 and older, but just this week that same FDA approval was extended to recipients age 12-15. Makers of the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are also conducting trials for this age group and are expected to soon seek the same endorsement. In fact, later this year there may be vaccines available to children as young as age 2.

The Pfizer vaccine is a two-dose regimen given at least 21 days apart, with a 95% efficacy rate. Moderna, also a two-dose regimen with similar efficacy, is given at least 28 days apart. Johnson & Johnson is a one-dose vaccine with a 66% overall efficacy rate.

In addition to the personal and community health benefits, perks of being fully vaccinated (two weeks past final dose) include often not having to quarantine if identified as a close contact of a COVID-positive person, and your presence not counting against capacity limits in many situations. Vaccine status already plays a role in socializing guidelines, and may eventually factor into travel recommendations and restrictions.

Attached to this letter should be an FDA news release regarding the Pfizer vaccine. As with any healthcare-related issue, it is always wise to consult with your medical provider in order to make an informed decision with your child's best interests at heart. DCHD respectfully requests that you do your homework, research the data, and give serious consideration to vaccinating your age-eligible children.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter. DCHD would be happy to provide more information should you want it, and you can also visit us online at www.dchealthdept.org. Wishing you a healthy, happy summer!

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