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# VAX FACTS



**August 5, 2021**

The purpose of *VaxFacts* is to share credible and up to date information about the COVID-19 vaccine from Canadian sources to help the conversations you are having with children, youth and families. If you have a resource or event that you think the sector would benefit from, send it to us via [covid19@oacas.org](mailto:covid19@oacas.org) and don't hesitate to share this email.

Check out [oacas.org/EveryShotCounts](https://oacas.org/EveryShotCounts) for a collection of the best resources from previous editions of *VaxFacts* and more!

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## Recent News

- Almost 90% of Ontarians have had at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine! You can track progress by age group and region using Public Health Ontario's tool [here](#).
- Being fully immunized is the best way to prevent serious illness. Real world data shows that vaccination offers substantial protection from the Delta variant which is now the dominant strain of infection and is much more transmissible and severe than previous strains. Read what the clever people [@COVIDvaccinefacts](#) have

put together to clearly illustrate what's happening in Ontario and why vaccination remains so important.

## Children and Youth

- Please continue to speak to the young people you intersect with about vaccination and support them with their efforts to be vaccinated, including with transportation and checking in on them afterwards. Public Health experts stress that a high vaccination rate will be key in helping keep schools open.
- As vaccination rates increase, mass vaccination clinics in many areas are winding down and many PHUs have plans for school-based clinics beginning in September. **Although consent from caregivers is not required for capable children**, some Boards of Education have policies in place that require an adult signature for immunizations that are provided in school. We encourage you to link with your local School Board to understand if this is the case and work with caregivers to ensure that this is not an undue barrier for young people who have not yet been immunized and would like to access a school-based clinic.

## Children under 12

- There remains a question mark as to when authorization will be given for children under 12 to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Studies are underway and it is expected to be authorized first for the 5-11 age group and later for the under 5s. This recent [article](#) cites an opinion that it will be by “the end of the year” in Canada.
- Although there is not expected to be any supply issues with the vaccine for any population, if prioritizations do need to be made, OACAS contributed to the Children’s Vaccine Table’s recommendations to government that it be prioritized as follows to ensure the needs of children that intersect with child welfare are considered:

If prioritization is necessary, offer the vaccine in phases based on priority

populations:

- First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) children
  - Children living in high-risk congregate settings including multifamily homes such as foster care settings
  - Children living in hot spot communities
  - Children with a health condition that places them at higher risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19
- We will continue to update progress in this area as information becomes available.

### **In case you missed it!**

- **On July 21, 2021 OACAS hosted a town hall with Dr. Upton Allen from SickKids on the COVID-19 vaccine and Black children and youth.** Dr. Allen, Head of the Department of Infectious Diseases at the Hospital for Sick Children and member of the Black Scientists' Task Force on Vaccine Equity, spoke with Keishia Facey, Program Lead for the One Vision One Voice Program. He shared information and data to address common misconceptions and myths related to COVID-19 vaccines and took the time to answer many thoughtful questions from participants. The session was recorded and can be viewed [here](#).
- **On July 27, 2021, OACAS, in partnership with Sick Kids, Anishnawbe Health Toronto, and Toronto-based Children's Aid Societies and Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agencies, hosted our second COVID-19 vaccine clinic for young people receiving child welfare services.** The clinic was a success, with over 70 vaccinations administered, including a number of first doses and many more who returned for their second shots. We would like to thank all those who supported the event, including the Children's Aid Society of Toronto for hosting and the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada for providing financial support for the treats and incentives. We continue to encourage agencies to have open and honest conversations about vaccinations with their staff and the children, youth, and families they work with. Visit

[www.oacas.org/EveryShotCounts](http://www.oacas.org/EveryShotCounts) for credible, trusted information and resources about COVID-19 vaccines.

**About the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies:**

Since 1912, OACAS has represented Ontario's Children's Aid Societies in Ontario and provided service in the areas of government relations, communications, information management, education and training to advocate for the protection and well-being of children.

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