



Ontario Association of
Children's Aid Societies



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The purpose of Vax Facts is to provide up to date, credible information about the COVID-19 vaccination process in Ontario. Please feel free to also use these resources to augment your local discussions about vaccinations. If you have a resource that you think the sector would benefit from, send it to covid19@oacas.org.

This week's *Vax Facts* segment is focused on resources to augment understanding of the vaccination picture for Ontario children and youth. Several conversations are underway to provide you with additional child and youth focused information as time goes on and as vaccinations become more available to children and youth.

The COVID-19 Vaccine and Youth: What We Know So Far

- There is currently no vaccine approved in Canada for people under the age of 16.
- The two dose Pfizer vaccine **is approved** for youth 16+ and we know that some youth are already receiving this vaccine via the shelter system and pop-up vaccine clinics offered in some areas by Indigenous and youth serving agencies. In [Phase 2](#) of the provincial vaccine roll out, youth living in children's residential settings and youth justice facilities are clearly articulated as eligible for the vaccine.
- The Pfizer vaccine is also [approved in 'special circumstances'](#) for youth between 12 to 15 years of age who are at very high risk of severe outcomes of COVID-19. To our knowledge, this criterion is not yet routinely being used and would only be accessible after conversations with a child's medical provider.
- So far, pediatric trials to enable more widespread vaccination for children and youth are underway by Johnson & Johnson (for those aged 12 to 17) and Moderna (for those 6 mo+ to 12), however approval other than what is articulated above is not expected until fall 2021.
- Although widespread vaccination for children and younger youth is not likely in the immediate future, receiving credible information about COVID-19 vaccine early and often is integral to help youth make informed decisions when the time does come.

A Few Words on Consent and Privacy

- Under Ontario law, everyone is presumed to have the capacity to make health care decisions for themselves, no matter their age.
- This means that youth can make their own choice about receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, provided they understand what they are consenting to. This is called *informed consent*.
- Being informed and making a voluntary choice are two of the main principles enshrined in the [Health Care Consent Act](#), the Act that guides health care decision making in Ontario.
- Unlike some forms, the current [provincial COVID-19 consent form](#) **does not** ask for an adult to co-sign based on age. This means that youth can sign their own COVID-19 vaccine consent form.
- In some cases, youth will receive the COVID-19 vaccine without your knowledge or support via community clinics or independent access. Their vaccine status is their personal health information and they are not obligated to share it if they do not want to.
- You can read more about the youth consent, capacity, and health decision privacy [here](#).
- For more youth focused guidance on health care decisions generally, look [here](#) and [here](#).
- For younger youth, the PACY guide is fulsome and has some good resources to work through decision making with youth. Find it [here](#). *Note: It is from 2013 and although it references the CFSA, the consent pieces are still relevant.*
- If a child or youth is **not capable** of making their own decision because of a developmental or other special need, depending on your legal authority, you may be able to make the decision for them. It will be important to revisit your agency's policy to help guide these individual decisions.

Resources for Youth

- For conversations with Indigenous Youth, *Maad'ookiing Mshkiki – Sharing Place*, has a number of [resources](#) that might be helpful.
- For conversations with Black youth, share the OVOV produced [Conversations with health leaders about the COVID-19 vaccine](#).
- UHN *Sanctuary Comics*: [How the COVID-19 Vaccines Work](#), [Guide to Getting Vaxxed](#), and [How Did They Make the Vaccine So Fast?](#)
- [Educating Kids about the COVID-19 Vaccine](#), Boston Children's Hospital
- [Busting Myths about the COVID-19 Vaccine](#), Holland Bloorview Hospital
- [COVID-19 vaccine: Does it work? Is it safe? When can kids get it?](#), CBC Kids News

Webinars for Youth

- Dr. Andrew Morris, an infectious disease physician and co-author of the Sick Kids reports: [COVID-19 Guidance for School Reopening](#), hosted a webinar with Q+A for youth on February 17 and answered lots of questions about COVID-19 and the vaccines. You can watch it [here](#).
- Dr. Sunit Ranade, the Medical Officer of Health for Lambton County who did a fantastic webinar on COVID-19 vaccines for the child welfare sector on March 8, also has a series of 3 videos called: *COVID-19 Vaccine Questions with Kids*. Watch it [here](#).

Instagram Accounts to Recommend for Youth

- [@covid19vaccinefacts](#), written by Canadian doctors in plain language with new content posted regularly.
- [@punjabikidshealth](#), written by an ON pediatrician about kid's health generally with a good COVID-19 section. Bilingual, youth friendly resources in English and Punjabi.

Tiktok Accounts to Recommend for Youth

- [@dr_faith_uwadiae](#)
- [@anna.blakney](#)
- [@dr.noc](#)
- [#teamhalo](#)