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November 8, 2021
Health Department of Northwest Michigan COVID-19 Update

Parents: vaccination for children ‘good for them and for the community good’

Parents concerned about the health and well-being of their children and family – and the community-at-large – are registering their child for COVID-19 vaccination clinics offered by the providers across the region.

Appointments for 5-11 year olds through the Health Department of Northwest Michigan are available, said Dr. Josh Meyerson, Pediatrician and Medical Director for the health department. In addition to the health department, parents should also check with local pharmacies and their family doctor or pediatrician for availability of the COVID-19 vaccine.

“I am pleased with the positive response we are seeing from parents and guardians who are looking to not only protect their child and family from COVID-19 but also the greater community,” Dr. Meyerson said. “All the research that has taken place shows this vaccine is both safe and effective - whether you’re 5 years old or 95 years old. Our region is still at a high transmission level and the best way to reduce this spread and return to the normalcy we all seek is to get vaccinated,” he added.

The Paquet family is doing their part and have scheduled their 11-year-old son for his COVID-19 vaccine later this month.

“I am super excited and so is he,” said Erayna Paquet about her son, Luke, a 5th grader. “We have absolutely no hesitation about getting Luke vaccinated,” she said, adding that once fully vaccinated he is looking forward to seeing his friends more regularly and not having to worry about giving COVID to his grandparents. “We want to do the right thing...we need to get people vaccinated and get back to normal,” she stressed.

According to health department officials, the region is reporting a high level of COVID-19 case transmissions with school-age cases a large percentage of reported cases. Although children are at a lower risk of becoming severely ill with COVID-19 compared with adults, children can:

- Be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19
- Get very sick from COVID-19
- Have both short and long-term health complications from COVID-19
- Spread COVID-19 to others

Getting vaccinated is the best way to stop the spread of COVID-19 in schools and the community. The Health Department is hosting clinics especially geared toward children 5 to 11 years old. These separate

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.

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clinics will accommodate children in numerous ways, including clinics outside of school hours, allowing parents to comfort their child by having them sit on their lap, and smaller than clinics held for adults.

A parent/guardian must accompany anyone younger than 18 to a COVID-19 clinic. Please bring an insurance card to the appointment.

To schedule an appointment exclusively for children 5 to 11 years old, [click here](#). To schedule an appointment for anyone 12 and older, [click here](#). Anyone may call 800-432-4121 if they have questions or are not able to find a time or date that works for them and/or their child.

Stay up to date on the latest information in the Health Department of Northwest Michigan jurisdiction by [liking and following our Facebook page](#) and visiting our [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#). To locate a testing facility, visit the [Michigan COVID-19 Test Finder website](#). To track the risk levels of COVID-19 pandemic indicators, visit the [MI Safe Start Map website](#). For more information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, visit the MDHHS [vaccine website](#) or the [CDC vaccine website](#).

CUTLINE:

Nathan and Erayna Paquet are eager to get their son, Luke, 11, vaccinated with the COVID-19 shot later this month. The family is shown with their dog Trooper. (Photo courtesy of Sophia Stahl)

