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American Academy of Pediatrics

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RE: COVID-19 Vaccine Authorized for 5-11 year olds

With vaccines now widely available to protect against COVID-19, we have made big steps toward ending the pandemic. As of November 2, 2021, a pediatric version of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is now approved for children aged 5-11. This is a vaccine designed for 5–11-year-olds and like all COVID-19 vaccines, is available for FREE in Illinois. Studies have concluded that the vaccine is safe and effective in children 5-11 and older.

The pediatric vaccine is given in two doses, 21 days apart. It is allowed to be given at the same time as other vaccines, such as the annual flu shot. We encourage you to plan to get the COVID-19 vaccine for your entire family as soon as you can – and especially before any holiday gatherings. **If your pediatrician does not yet offer the pediatric Pfizer vaccine, you can find a location such as a pharmacy or hospital near you that does by:**

- Going to [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) (note children ages 5 to 18 can get the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine only)
- Texting your ZIP code to 438829
- Calling 1-800-232-0233

The COVID-19 vaccine is our best hope for keeping our children healthy and in school, ending the pandemic and returning to normal.

We hope schools and parents will help make sure children are caught up on recommended vaccines (flu, measles or MMR, whooping cough, etc.), that may also be required for school entry. Please continue to follow the latest news on COVID-19 vaccines through the [coronavirus.illinois.gov](https://www.coronavirus.illinois.gov) website and your local health department.

For more information, please talk to your child's health care provider and visit [Healthychildren.org](https://www.Healthychildren.org).

Sincerely,

Mary Dobbins, MD, FAAP, President