



## Department of Education and Training

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Dear parents and carers

Children aged 5 to 11 will be eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations from 10 January 2022. This includes 5-year-olds attending Early Childhood Education and Care services.

These vaccinations will be available at participating general practices (GPs), pharmacies, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, and family-friendly state vaccination centres.

The vaccine is one third of the adult dose and will be delivered at 2 appointments, expected to be 8 weeks apart. The time between the two doses can be shortened in special circumstances, such as in an outbreak response or for international travel.

The commencement of the program from 10 January provides an opportunity for all children aged 5 to 11 to receive at least one vaccine dose before the end of January 2022, and their second dose before 8 April 2022. You are strongly encouraged to book your child or children in to receive their first vaccination in January. Some children will already be 5 at the start of the year, while others will turn 5 over the year – families should book their children in for vaccination as soon as possible after their fifth birthday.

COVID-19 vaccines have been tested, and shown to be safe and effective in protecting against serious illness and reducing the likelihood of COVID-19 spreading. They are important to protect you and your loved ones from COVID-19 and to reduce disruption to your child's education and care. Vaccination is not mandatory to attend early childhood services, but it is highly encouraged to keep all children safe.

### How to book an appointment

Bookings will be available later in December 2021. You will be able to book a vaccine appointment at a participating general practice (GPs), pharmacy or community health service, or at family-friendly state vaccination centres through the [Vaccine Clinic Finder](#). For information on what to bring to a vaccine appointment please visit [Checklist: before your COVID-19 vaccination](#).

### Victorian Coronavirus Hotline

The Victorian Department of Health's [Coronavirus Hotline](#) 1800 675 398 can assist you with bookings at general practice (GPs), pharmacy and family-friendly state vaccination centres, and help with any questions you have about vaccination.

## Support for children with disability or special requirements

There is [extra support](#) for children with disabilities and specialist requirements to access COVID-19 vaccinations.

Parents of children with disability who need extra assistance to access a vaccination should contact specialist [Disability Liaison Officers](#) who can help make the process easier.

The [Association for Children with a Disability](#) will hold a Facebook live session for families with children with additional needs on Tuesday 11 January at 10.30am. [Register online](#).

## Parent and community webinars

Experts from the Royal Children's Hospital will hold a Facebook live session – 'COVID-19 vaccinations for five- to 11-year-olds: Your questions answered' on Thursday 16 December at 11am. Refer to [the Facebook page](#) for more information.

The Department of Health and leading medical research organisations will run webinars for parents and carers about COVID-19 vaccinations for 5- to 11-year-old children. Details to follow.

## More information

Resources are available to help you and your child or children prepare for the vaccination:

- [Needle phobia - The Melbourne Vaccine Education Centre \(MVEC\) \(mcri.edu.au\)](#)
- [Tips to help a child afraid of needles and stop it becoming a phobia - ABC Everyday](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccination social scripts - Amaze - Autism resource](#)
- [Sesame Street ABC of COVID vaccines](#)

The Victorian Government's coronavirus website also has [information about COVID-19 vaccines in 63 community languages](#).

To ensure the safest start to 2022 for your child or children, I encourage you to help them get vaccinated before the end of January.

Yours sincerely

**Kim Little**  
Deputy Secretary  
Early Childhood Education  
14 December 2021