

COVID-19 News for Schools

WEEK OF MAY 10

Throughout May, Vaccinate West Michigan will bring you the latest in COVID-19 vaccine information, as well as stories, events and resources, all with the goal of providing you with timely, relevant information for your school districts, parents and students.

Pfizer Vaccines Available for 16+

Currently, Pfizer is the only vaccine that is approved for anyone 16 and up. Appointments are easier than ever to schedule. Some locations even allow walk-ins.

- A parent or guardian must accompany minors.
- [Find available clinics](#) through your local health department, health system or pharmacy. Vaccines are free for everyone.
- To set up an appointment for someone 16 or 17, or for those needing special assistance, please call 833.755.0696.
- Download, post or share [this flier](#).

Note: The FDA just authorized the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for emergency use in adolescents ages 12-15. [Read more about the announcement.](#)



Vaccinate West Michigan is a collaborative of local health departments, health systems, pharmacies, colleges and universities, and more – who have partnered together with the common goal to meet the diverse needs of our communities and share COVID-19 vaccine facts, data and clinics. [Learn more.](#)

Student Stories Worth Sharing



Holland High School senior [Angel Ruiz](#) shares how COVID-19 impacted classmates who gathered without taking the necessary precautions.



High school student [Ruby Taylor](#) shares why she chose to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Talking to Parents and Students About the Benefits of Vaccines

The COVID-19 vaccine is safe, effective and the best tool in our toolkit to prevent and reduce severity of infections. Vaccines will also help maintain in-person learning, sports and other school-related activities. When you're fully vaccinated you can:

- Visit with other fully vaccinated friends and family indoors without wearing masks or distancing.
- Visit with unvaccinated people indoors from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease without wearing masks or distancing.
- Participate in most outdoor activities and recreation without a mask.
- Travel with no need to test before or after, or quarantine.
- Skip testing/routine screening and quarantine following a known exposure, if asymptomatic.

[Learn more from the CDC.](#)

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#SleevesUp

Staff, teachers, parents and students are encouraged to participate in Kent County Health Department's Sleeves Up social campaign. After you get a vaccine, share your story or photo, using the hashtag #SleevesUp. [See who else rolled their sleeves up.](#)

Informative Reads

[Pediatricians Weigh In On What's Safe And Not Safe For Unvaccinated Children](#)

[Pediatricians: We need to bust these myths about kids and COVID vaccines](#)

Conversations and Events

Watch Spectrum Health's panel of community and clinical experts [explore ways to connect with and engage younger Michiganders](#) on the topic of vaccinations and staying safe during the COVID-19 pandemic in general.

Watch a Mercy Health pediatrician [talk about the importance of vaccinations for youth](#), as well as staying in the routine of well-child visits and not delaying care.

Watch Ottawa County community mental health professionals talk about [how to build resiliency in kids amid a pandemic](#). Hear how to help kids navigate the challenges when confronted with isolation, quarantine or not being able to play sports and take part in other youth activities.



West Michigan Vaccine Clinic Update

The West Michigan Vaccine Clinic at DeVos Place will be winding down services and closing by May 21. While demand continues for the vaccine, the pace does not require a large-scale operation like WMVC. Vaccine efforts will be directed toward smaller, community-based clinics where there is continued need. [Visit Vaccinate West Michigan](#) to find additional vaccine clinics.