

Public Health Agency of Canada Vaccine InfoBulletin

August 13, 2021

This fifth issue of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) Vaccine InfoBulletin is being released in the midst of the “last mile” of mass roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines across Canada. We are all working hard in this context to close the gap in vaccine coverage among eligible Canadians. Achieving this goal requires action at all levels, and we are pleased to provide you with trusted resources within this InfoBulletin.

COVID-19 vaccination among young Canadians

According to the most recent data available from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Canadians under 29 years of age represent nearly [40% of COVID-19 cases](#)¹ in the country, and currently have the [lowest uptake of COVID-19 vaccines](#)² among all eligible age groups.

In order to support a safe “return to school” in the coming weeks and a safe and healthy economic restart, we are calling on our partners to help promote and support vaccine acceptance and uptake among young people. Here are some ways in which you and your organization can help:

- Host a **community engagement session** focused on COVID-19 vaccine education and promotion for young people and their families. See the [featured resource](#) section for materials to support with this.
- Explore **funding opportunities** available in your community to support vaccine promotion initiatives. PHAC is supporting 150+ such initiatives, many of them specifically targeting youth, through the [Immunization Partnership Fund](#) and the [Vaccine Community Innovation Challenge](#). While PHAC is no longer accepting funding proposals, many municipalities and community-based organizations across the country similarly offer funding to support such initiatives.
- Share credible, **evidence-based information** on COVID-19 vaccines and the vaccination of young people. You can find this information and in various formats (videos, posters, social media shareables, etc.) through [Immunize Canada](#) and [Canada.ca](#) vaccine webpages. More resources are linked through the [vaccines for children](#) webpage.
- *For health care providers:* Consult available resources on **COVID-19 vaccination for young people** and addressing needle fear (a key barrier to vaccination among children and adolescents). Examples include the [CARD system](#) for minimizing vaccine-related discomfort and needle fear, and resources available through [CanVAX](#) and PHAC’s expanding [suite of online resources](#) for health care providers on COVID-19 vaccines.

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¹ Public Health Agency of Canada. COVID-19 daily epidemiology update [web page]. Retrieved from: <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/covid-19/epidemiological-summary-covid-19-cases.html>

² Public Health Agency of Canada. COVID-19 vaccination in Canada [web page]. Retrieved from: <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/covid-19/vaccination-coverage/>

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SPOTLIGHT ON ... COMMUNITY-BASED COVID-19 VACCINE PROMOTION INITIATIVES

Featured initiative: Kids Boost Immunity

With funding from PHAC's [Immunization Partnership Fund](#), various organizations across the country are working to educate youth and their parents on the importance of vaccination. One such initiative is [Kids Boost Immunity](#) (KBI), developed by the Public Health Association of British Columbia. KBI is a school-based, online learning platform that uses a variety of interventions, including quizzes and classroom competitions, to improve students' vaccine knowledge, attitudes and beliefs. KBI lessons are developed with practicing teachers to ensure the learning content is age appropriate and meets the diverse needs of students.

This online platform is free for teachers and has been developed to engage students in grades 4 -12 (including sec 1-5 & cégep). Each time a student scores 80% or more on a quiz, KBI donates a routine childhood vaccine to UNICEF Canada, encouraging students to make an impact locally and globally at the same time.

FEATURED RESOURCE

The Government of Canada's virtual "event in a box" resource to support community-based engagement sessions on COVID-19 vaccines ([available here](#))

Since December 2020, we have seen large-scale COVID-19 education and awareness initiatives led by governments, as well as industry, and major health organizations across the country. Though these initiatives can have a significant reach, research is clear that grassroots, local-level initiatives led by community leaders can be more effective at building and maintaining public confidence in COVID-19 vaccines within their communities, particularly among equity-seeking groups.

The "event in a box" includes a step-by-step guide for how to plan and carry out a successful engagement session, including advice on selecting an online event platform, creating an agenda and sending out invitations. It also includes sample social media posts, email templates, presentation slides and remarks that event hosts can tailor to suit their audience's needs and preferences.

The guide is intended to facilitate the sharing of evidence-based information on COVID-19 vaccines and COVID-19 public health measures, while addressing mis/disinformation within communities. Additionally, the "event in a box" was designed to remove barriers that may make it more difficult for community leaders to host engagement sessions, such as the need for specialized know-how on virtual event platforms or the time to develop event materials from "scratch".

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NEW RESOURCE FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

The University of Calgary's *Vaccine Hesitancy Guide* (available [here](#))

Canadians cite health care providers as a trusted source of COVID-19 information and advice.³ As a trusted source, health care providers are well-positioned to support vaccine uptake among youth and address vaccine hesitancy within their communities.

Recently, the University of Calgary published a [Vaccine Hesitancy Guide](#), an interactive web resource intended to support health care providers in navigating conversations with vaccine hesitant patients. University of Calgary researchers developed the guide in collaboration with clinicians from across Canada. The guide's advice, general principles and scripts are grounded in the techniques of motivational interviewing, an evidence-based approach for addressing vaccine hesitancy that encourages both the clinician and the patient to identify positive motivations for vaccination. The research team also developed the 'EAASE' steps (Engage, Affirm, Ask then Share, Evoke) to help guide conversations with vaccine hesitant patients.

This guide complements other evidence-based resources that have been developed to support health care providers in educating their patients about COVID-19 vaccines, including PHAC's [vaccine hesitancy primer](#) and the Canadian Paediatric Society's [online learning module](#) on vaccine hesitancy.

If you have any questions or comments about this InfoBulletin, or if you would like to be added to our email mailing list and receive this InfoBulletin directly, please email us at:

phac.vaccination.aspc@canada.ca.

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³ Impact Canada. COVID-19 Snapshot Monitoring (COSMO Canada). Retrieved from: <https://impact.canada.ca/en/challenges/cosmo-canada>