

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Suburban Rail Loop

Acting Premier



Wednesday, 5 January 2022

STATE HUBS A 'FOREST OF PROTECTION' FOR CHILD VACCINATIONS

State-run vaccination sites across Victoria are being transformed into an Australian-themed 'forest of protection' creating a friendly environment for children aged 5 to 11 years to receive their vaccination.

Eight flagship vaccination centres will feature fun imagery of native Australian animals, as well as entertainers, activities and showbags designed to help make the vaccination experience positive for children and their families.

The forest-themed sites will be located at Melton Vaccination Hub (indoor and drive-through), Campbellfield Ford Complex, Cranbourne Turf Club, Sandown Racecourse, Frankston Community Vaccination Hub, Geelong's Former Ford Factory, Shepparton Showgrounds and Traralgon Racecourse.

From 1pm today, parents and guardians can book at one of the 18 state-run vaccination centres offering child vaccinations online or through the coronavirus hotline. Online bookings require a unique email address, which can be the child's address or another one belonging to a parent or guardian.

Children who get vaccinated at one of the eight flagship sites will receive a showbag with goodies that can help with distraction, including a colouring-in book by First Nations artist Emma Bamblett, coloured pencils, stickers and fidget spinners.

The decoration has been developed with children and parents, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Children will also be able to place a leaf with their name on it on the 'eucalyptus vaccination tree' that grows with every child vaccinated, with parents also able to add a leaf after receiving their third dose.

The state-run sites have been designed to cater for children who need additional support during their vaccination process such as a visual distraction, virtual reality headsets and the Buzzy Bees ice pack. The child-friendly vaccination hubs also provide low-sensory booths and are able to cater for specific needs.

In addition, parents and guardians are encouraged to also check for paediatric vaccination appointments at their local GPs and pharmacies across Victoria.

An immunisation plan has been developed by the Department of Health and The Royal Children's Hospital as a resource for guardians to help decide where and how to book based on their child's needs.

Parents and guardians of children between 5 and 11 are recommended to book in their child's first dose in the lead up to the program commencing 10 January. The paediatric Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine reduces COVID-19 risks for children and has the additional benefit of reducing risks of transmission to older contacts.

For more information and to book your children's first dose – visit www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine. Bookings can also be made via the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 or via your local pharmacy or GP.

Quotes attributable to Acting Premier Jacinta Allan

"By getting your child vaccinated, you are providing them with direct protection against COVID-19 and reducing the risk of transmission to loved ones and in schools."

"We want to create a vaccination experience that is positive for the whole family - the forest themed hubs have been designed to provide a welcoming and accessible experience for children of all backgrounds and abilities."

Media contact: Hayley Bester 0424 753 775 | hayley.bester@minstaff.vic.gov.au