

Thursday, 27 January 2022

FINAL PUSH TO PROTECT KIDS BEFORE SCHOOL

The Victorian Government is making sure families have every opportunity to get their children aged 5-11 vaccinated before Term 1 starts – with more options than ever to get kids protected, close to home.

State-run vaccination clinics will accept walk-ups for the paediatric vaccine, with Victoria's state-run system expanding to include walk-up access for children aged 5 to 11.

Since they began on 10 January, vaccinations for this age group have been booking only, and walk-ups will be limited to select sites due to the added complexity of child immunisation and the need for specialist immunisers.

Initial walk-up locations for children will include Dandenong Plaza, Caroline Springs, Sunshine Hospital and Campbellfield Ford Complex. Children aged 5 to 11 who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander can already walk-up with their parents, carers or guardians to any site to get vaccinated.

In addition, the first 15 school pop-ups will open in primary schools right across Victoria this weekend to deliver more doses in local communities before school returns – with the other 15 clinics to open next weekend.

Schools running pop-up clinics this weekend include:

- Kennington PS
- Moe Albert St PS
- Roxburgh Homestead PS
- Lilydale PS
- Glen Waverley PS
- Cranbourne West PS
- Fountain Gate PS
- Lyndale Greens PS
- Belle Vue Park PS
- Glengala PS
- Cairnlea Park PS
- Movelle PS
- St Albans East PS
- South Melbourne PS
- Wyndham Vale PS

The pop-up clinics will be led by Local Public Health Units, with many decorated to support children and their families to access vaccinations in a child friendly setting. Children do not have to attend these schools to be vaccinated at the pop-ups – they are open to the whole community.

The Government has also had more than 240 applications under a new \$4 million grants program to help local doctors and community pharmacies go into schools to deliver the vaccine in a familiar and trusted environment for children, close to home.

Already, 158 government and low-fee non-government schools – including 53 specialist schools – have been matched to a local health provider who will go into schools in the coming weeks to deliver vaccines. Host schools will soon communicate with families and invite them to attend the onsite clinic.

Under the program, local GPs and pharmacists can receive up to \$6,500 to cover staffing, travel and equipment costs to get out to schools and vaccinate children – with an additional \$5,000 clinic establishment fee per school also available, plus additional loadings for specialist schools or small, rural or regional schools.

To date, more than a third of children aged 5-11 in Victoria have already received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

For information about coronavirus visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au or call 1800 675 398.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“The countdown to Term 1 is on – and if parents haven’t organised to have their kids vaccinated yet, now’s the time. We’re making it easier than ever to get jabs in kids’ arms in a friendly environment, close to home.”

“We’ve done everything we can to make school a safe place when kids get back in the classroom – but the best thing families can do to protect their children is get them protected by a vaccine as quickly as possible.”