COVID-19 Vaccines For Children:
Facts for Parents and Guardians

Washtenaw County Health Department
healthy together

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective for kids.

Everyone 6 months and older should get vaccinated against COVID-19! Vaccines are the best way to protect from the worst impacts of COVID-19. The vaccines' primary purpose is to prevent severe disease and death. Parents and guardians can choose either Pfizer or Moderna vaccine for their children.

Mild to moderate side effects are normal.

- Common side effects include fever, fatigue, headaches, chills, diarrhea, pain at the injection site, and muscle and joint pain.
- Side effects usually only last a day or two.

It's important for kids to get vaccinated.

Kids who get COVID-19 may have no symptoms or they may get very sick.

- Most kids who get COVID-19 have mild to moderate illness, but there's still risk for severe disease.
- Over 1,000 pediatric deaths have been reported. Although this seems low compared to adults, COVID-19 is now a <u>top 10</u> cause of death for kids in the United States.
- Long COVID occurs among kids. Vaccines reduce the risk of long COVID.

COVID spreads more easily in unvaccinated communities. Vaccinating kids will help slow spread.

Long-term side effects from the vaccines are highly unlikely.

Based on our knowledge of mRNA and the human body, we do not expect long-term side effects from the vaccines:

- Vaccine ingredients leave the body very quickly. mRNA is very fragile and degrades within 72 hours. Ingredients do not linger in the body. It is impossible for mRNA vaccines to change DNA.
- mRNA vaccines are not made of actual virus, so vaccines can't give you COVID-19.
- There is no evidence that the vaccine can impact fertility.
- Myocarditis (heart inflammation) has been linked to mRNA vaccines in adolescents, but it is rare.
  - Children and adults are much more likely to get myocarditis from the COVID-19 virus than they are from the COVID-19 vaccine.
  - It is more common for male adolescents and more common from the 2nd dose.
  - Most patients with myocarditis who received care responded well to medicine and rest and felt better quickly.

We do know that getting COVID-19 can lead to serious long-term health problems for kids.

Kids who already had COVID-19 should still get vaccinated.

- Some people can get protection from "natural" immunity. But, protection goes away over time. Protection after infection may not protect against other variants.
- **Getting vaccinated after recovering from COVID provides extra, more reliable protection.**

Bonus facts...

- Health care providers and experts support COVID-19 vaccines.
- Fully vaccinated kids will not need to quarantine if they get exposed.
- Research and clinical trials helped health experts decide on the dosage and number of shots that are safe and effective for each age group.

Find a vaccine clinic near you! Visit http://bit.ly/vaxwchd or call 734-544-6700.