

COVID-19 RESOURCE TOOLKIT

TEMPLATES

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Louisiana Chapter

INCORPORATED IN LOUISIANA

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



Louisiana
Vaccine Alliance

SAMPLE LANGUAGE FOR LETTERS, EMAILS, OR OTHER COMMUNICATION

VERSION A – FROM VACCINATED PHYSICIAN

Before I made the decision to get a COVID-19 vaccine, I took time to review the facts and the science. I was convinced that the vaccines are very effective and safe. In fact, after being fully vaccinated, none of the tens of thousands of trial participants were hospitalized or died from COVID-19. That gave me the confidence I needed to get the vaccine as soon as it was offered to me.

If you're still trying to decide if you'll get a COVID vaccine, I strongly recommend that you get vaccinated as soon as it's available to you. Your health, and the health of our community, is incredibly important to me, and the COVID-19 vaccine will help protect you and your loved ones from getting sick. And it will help us all get back to doing the things we love.

I want to make sure you have the information you need to make the decision that's right for you. If you have any questions, please contact our office at [[phone number](#)].

If you need to schedule an appointment to be vaccinated, [[information on how to schedule an appointment](#)].

VERSION B – GENERIC

Getting a vaccine is an important and personal decision, and when I heard the FDA had authorized vaccines for COVID-19, I had questions. I did my research and found that the vaccines available today are safe and very effective. Serious side effects are rare and treatable, and minor side effects, like a sore arm, usually go away within a few days.

Your health, and the health of our community, is incredibly important to me. The COVID-19 vaccine will help protect you and your loved ones from getting sick. And it will help us all get back to doing the things we love.

If you haven't been vaccinated yet, I strongly recommend that you get a COVID-19 vaccine when it's available to you. If you have any questions, please contact our office at [[phone number](#)].

If you need to schedule an appointment to be vaccinated, [[information on how to schedule an appointment](#)].

PROVIDERS CAN MODIFY THESE MESSAGES TO RECALL PEDIATRIC PATIENTS BACK TO THE OFFICE FOR NEEDED IMMUNIZATIONS AND CHECKUPS

“Hi there! My name is [your name] and I am calling from [your doctor/clinic name]. I am calling to let you know that your child is due for some routine vaccines. We are committed to keeping your family healthy, especially during a pandemic, so we are taking extra precautions to make it safe to come in! Please call us back at [your number] to schedule a visit.”

“Hi there, this is [your name] from [your doctor/clinic name]. We are calling to let you know that we are open and ready to continue with checkups and vaccines for your child. We want to reassure you that we are taking every precaution to keep your family safe while visiting our office. Please call us at [your number] to schedule a visit as soon as possible. Thank you.”

“Hi there, this is [your name] from [your doctor/clinic name]. We are calling to let you know that we are open and taking extra precautions to keep your family safe during visits. Our records show that [child’s name] is due for a checkup and routine vaccines! Don’t wait to vaccinate. Please call us at [your number] to schedule a visit as soon as possible. Thank you.”

“Hello, this is [your name] from [your doctor/clinic name]. As the school year gears up, we wanted to reach out and encourage you to schedule an appointment for your child’s routine vaccinations. These vaccines will help keep your child healthy and ready to learn! Please call us at [your number] to schedule a visit as soon as possible. Thank you!”

“Hello, this is [your name] from [your doctor/clinic name]. Flu season and holidays are here, and we want to do whatever we can to help keep your family protected. We strongly recommend that all children get the flu vaccine and stay up to date on routine vaccines. This is the best way to keep you child(ren) and family. If you would like to schedule a time to get a vaccine for you or your child, please call us at [your number] to schedule a visit. Thank you!”

TALKING POINTS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA, PRESS RELEASES, AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

Don't wait—vaccinate

- Getting immunized is important especially as restrictions are eased. It's the best way to prevent spread of vaccine-preventable diseases.
- Even while Louisiana is responding to COVID-19, it's essential that parents make sure their children continue to be protected from serious vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles and whooping cough.
- While staying at home and limiting social outings during the COVID-19 outbreak has helped to slow the spread of the virus, it also has resulted in delays and decreases in the number of children and adults getting their recommended vaccines.
- Louisiana and US data from 2020 show troubling decreases in the administration of childhood and adult vaccines during the COVID-19 pandemic, indicating that communities may be vulnerable to serious disease.
- Each wave of COVID-19 and associated restrictions might add to the number of children and adults with delayed immunizations.
- Postponing routine vaccinations puts you, families and communities at risk for infection with preventable deadly diseases.
- As restrictions ease and people begin to gather, infants and children who are not protected by vaccines could be vulnerable to diseases like measles and whooping cough.
- Similarly, adults who aren't vaccinated now may be more vulnerable to diseases like shingles and pneumonia.

It's safe to come in

- We understand you may feel a little uneasy about coming into the doctor's office these days. Hospitals, clinics and other healthcare settings across the state have taken extra care to ensure patients are safe when visiting.
- Additional safety measures may include separating times for sick and healthy patients, masking requirements, additional disinfecting between appointments, physical distancing in waiting rooms and many other precautionary measures to make sure patients stay safe. Some clinics offer drive-through clinics, where you can get care without leaving your car.

- Parents should talk to their children’s doctor and work together to make sure their children are up-to-date on all their vaccines.

Call your doctor

- Make a vaccine appointment today to keep you and your family protected during and after the pandemic.
- As Louisianians return to activities and gatherings, there may be many children who need to catch up on immunizations, increasing wait times for appointments.
- Delaying vaccines puts children at risk of exposure to dangerous vaccine-preventable diseases circulating in the community.
- For those who are out of work or without health insurance, it’s important to know you can still get your child vaccinated. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program offers free vaccines to families who cannot afford to pay for their children’s vaccines (through 19 years of age). Talk to your healthcare provider to find out more.

TALKING TO PATIENTS

Every patient interaction is an opportunity to share information and answer questions about COVID-19 vaccines. Here are research-based suggestions for productive conversations about COVID-19 vaccines.

- **START FROM A PLACE OF EMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING.**

Acknowledge the disruption that COVID-19 has caused in all our lives. Remind patients that getting vaccinated is the most important thing they can do to move back toward normal activities. Recognize that it's normal for someone to have concerns about a new vaccine for a new virus. Encourage them to ask questions, and answer in a way they can understand.

- **ACKNOWLEDGE THAT GETTING VACCINATED IS A PERSONAL DECISION.**

A physician's role is to provide information and answer questions so patients can make the decision that's right for them and their loved ones.

- **STATE CLEARLY WHAT WE KNOW AND WHAT WE DON'T KNOW.**

Don't overemphasize "potentials" (either potential risks or potential benefits). Contrast the known long-term effects of COVID-19 with the unknown potential risks of the vaccines.

- **FOCUS ON THE BENEFITS OF GETTING A COVID VACCINE.**

Not just the consequences of not getting vaccinated. Emphasize that the benefits of getting the vaccine far exceed the risks.

- **EXPLAIN THE HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH DECLINING TO BE VACCINATED.**

And tailor that conversation for the patient you're talking to, from your perspective as their physician.

- **MAKE IT PERSONAL.**

Be prepared for the questions "Did you get vaccinated?" and "Did your family members?" If you're comfortable, consider discussing your own decision to be vaccinated.

- **AFTER YOU'VE TALKED, TELL THEM THAT YOU ARE OPEN TO CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION, AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO TAKE AT LEAST ONE STEP.**

That may include scheduling a vaccination appointment, reviewing information you provide about the safety and importance of the vaccines, or learning when they will be eligible and what to expect.

- **BE DIRECT:**

- o I strongly recommend that you get a COVID-19 vaccine when it's available to you.
- o This vaccine is especially important for you because of your [[job function/underlying health condition](#)].
- o I believe in this vaccine so strongly that I got it as soon as I could, and I made sure everyone in my family did as well.

CUSTOMIZABLE COVID-19 VACCINE LETTER TO SEND TO PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

This sample letter template has information about COVID-19 vaccines for children ages 5 through 11 years and is designed for providers and partners to send to parents/caregivers. It can be edited to add any additional information you would like to include.

FROM: [insert office, clinic, vaccination event name]

SUBJECT: COVID-19 vaccines for children ages 5 to 11 years: What you need to know

COVID-19 vaccines are now available for children ages 5 years and older. We are excited to offer vaccines at our [insert office, clinic, or other location] to help protect your child from COVID-19. As we return to activities, larger gatherings and holidays, getting vaccinated provides an important layer of protection for your child, your family, and others. Schedule [insert link to organizational scheduler] or call [insert phone number] to schedule your child's COVID-19 vaccine today.

We know parents and caregivers have questions and want more information. Here's what you need to know.

- Children can still get very sick from COVID-19.
- Children can get infected with COVID-19, get very sick, suffer short- and long-term health complications, and spread COVID-19 to others.
- {INSERT QUOTE FROM SPOKESPERSON. Suggested quote: "We've seen a range of symptoms among children, from very mild to serious illness, and in some cases even requiring hospitalization. That's why we recommend the vaccine for children ages 5 years and older to protect them."} says [NAME and TITLE].

The COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective for children ages 5 through 11 years. COVID-19 vaccination has been studied carefully in children. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the expert panel that works with them have reviewed the data from clinical trials. They all agree that vaccination for children ages 5 through 11 years is safe and effective.

Here are some important points they used to make their recommendations:

- In clinical trials, vaccination was more than 90% effective in preventing COVID-19 in children ages 5 through 11 years.

- Unlike many medications, COVID-19 vaccine dosage does not vary by patient weight but by age on the day of vaccination. Children ages 5 through 11 years get an age-appropriate dose that is the right amount that was found to best protect children in clinical trials.
- The COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 through 11 years has the same active ingredients as the vaccine given to adults and adolescents. However, the vaccine that is given to adults and adolescents cannot be given to children.
- The safety of COVID-19 vaccine continues to be monitored. This includes the risk of myocarditis and pericarditis in children ages 5 through 11 years. However, serious health events, including severe allergic reactions and myocarditis and pericarditis, after COVID-19 vaccination are rare.
- The benefits of COVID-19 vaccination among children outweigh the known and potential risks.
- Your child may get the COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines, including flu vaccine, at the same time.

Your child may have some side effects. These are normal signs that their body is building protection. Some common side effects are

- Pain, redness, or swelling on the arm
- Tiredness
- Headache
- Muscle pain, chills, or fever
- Nausea

Some children will have no side effects and severe allergic reactions are rare. If your child experiences a severe allergic reaction after getting a COVID-19 vaccine, we are ready to respond. Most of the time, the only things your child might need after vaccination is rest, a non-aspirin pain reliever, and a cool washcloth at the injection site. Contact us if you need more information about treating potential side effects.

After vaccination, you can create or use your account to enter your child's information in v-safe. You can use this easy-to-use smartphone-based tool to report to CDC how your child is feeling after vaccination and will even remind you when your child is due for their second dose.

{INSERT OPTIONAL SECOND QUOTE FROM SPOKESPERSON. Suggested quote: "Here at [NAME OF ORGANIZATION], we have been planning and preparing for this moment. We are ready to help get children protected against COVID-19."} says [NAME and TITLE]. Schedule [insert link to organizational scheduler or insert number to call] your child's COVID-19 vaccine today.
Contact us with any questions at [insert contact info].

CONTACT INFO

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