

**Update on COVID-19**  
**Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health**  
**October 29, 2021 at 8:45 a.m.**  
**Scarborough Centre for Healthy**  
**Communities**

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- Thank you Mayor Tory, and good morning everyone.
- I think it's absolutely wonderful to be here at Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities – and to visit the Hub Community Vaccination Clinics.
- First and foremost, I would like to thank you the staff here – and thank as well the thousands of members of Team Toronto that have contributed to our City's vaccination efforts.
- It's remarkable to think that it was just a few short months ago, that we didn't have a vaccine for COVID-19.
- And now it's clinics like this one here in Scarborough that have been essential vaccination partners towards delivering millions of vaccines here in Toronto.
- And now, almost 10 months since the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine was administered in Toronto, we're here to talk about another incredible feat.
- We hope that we are only weeks away from when the first COVID-19 vaccine for children will be approved for use in Canada.
- Toronto Public Health, along with our Toronto hospital, health care, and community partners are preparing to vaccinate children between the ages of five and 11 years, once the vaccine is approved for this age group and the Ministry of Health provides the vaccine.
- Today, as you've heard the Mayor say, Toronto Public Health and the City's vaccine partners are inviting parents of children who are 5 to 11 years old to complete a survey about COVID-19 vaccinations.
- This survey will be an important component in our planning and distribution of vaccines across the City.

- We want to hear from you, we want to hear from parents, about your intentions, your thoughts, and your preferences as you consider when and how you will vaccinate your children against COVID-19.
- The survey will be open until November 7, and you will receive an invitation through your school to participate.
- In addition, we also want to be available, we want to make sure all vaccination partners are available to help answer your questions about vaccination.
- So for us, that's why we have started a series of education sessions and town halls all designed towards building vaccine confidence and making sure that you have opportunities to get your questions answered
- These town halls will help to prepare parents and the community agencies and members who help support the vaccine efforts, with facts about COVID-19 vaccination and in particular facts about COVID-19 vaccines and children.
- It is essential that children aged 5 to 11 are vaccinated against COVID-19.
- This important step not only protects children from contracting COVID-19, but provides critical protection to members of their family to those around them at school and to their entire community.
- So to parents and guardians – if you or another eligible member of your family have yet to receive two doses of COVID-19 vaccine – I ask that you make it a family affair and get every member of your family vaccinated.
- COVID-19 vaccine remains our best protection against serious illness and hospitalization associated with COVID-19 infection.
- We will have more information in the coming days about our plans this next phase of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign.

- And as we await for approval from Health Canada for these COVID-19 vaccines for 5 to 11 year-olds, I ask that parents and guardians throughout the city start reflecting on their intentions, start asking questions and please seek out the information you need to make the decision, but do so from credible sources of information.
- A great first stop is the Toronto.ca website, where we have a dedicated toolkit on COVID-19 vaccines and children.
- Together we can bring an end to this pandemic, and I can assure you that vaccination is key to making this happen.

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**Media contact:** [tphmedia@toronto.ca](mailto:tphmedia@toronto.ca)