



Superintendent's UPDATE

Wednesday, November 10, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccination Update

Hello San Mateo County Education and Child Care Community,

San Mateo County is enthusiastically embracing this most recent expansion of the Pfizer vaccine for our young residents, ages 5-11. With a variety of options for appointments in many venues, appointments slots filled up fast last week! Have no fear. The vaccine is here for our young friends and with patience and diligence, every child will find an appointment over the course of the coming months. With a three-week pause between shots and an additional two weeks for the vaccines to take effect, many San Mateo County children will be ringing in the new year fully vaccinated. What a hopeful way to start a new year!

If you are looking for a vaccine for a student or yourself, please visit [San Mateo County Health's website](#). You can scroll through a variety of location options and then visit [MyTurn](#) to register for an appointment.

Vaccines for Children 12 and Up

We still have more room to increase the vaccination rate of our older students. According to SMC Health, our vaccination rate for youth ages 12-15 receiving at least one dose is now at 78.8% and 72.5% having completed the series. These percentages drop further for our students of color. With vaccination mandates for schools on the horizon, it is critical that we get all of our students vaccinated so they don't miss a day or school or outside activities because of their vaccination status. Again, there are a lot of options available on the [SMCH](#) and [MyTurn](#) sites. Some of these clinics do not require appointments, making them an easier way to connect a vaccine with the arm of a young person.

Boosters for All Adults

On Tuesday, Pfizer asked federal regulators to authorize its COVID-19 booster for everyone 18 and older. The Food and Drug Administration is expected to approve the Pfizer booster before the winter holidays, and perhaps even before Thanksgiving, promising to make holiday gathering and travel a little less stressful. In addition to Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson boosters are available through vaccination events at the San Mateo County Event Center, pharmacies, healthcare systems, and smaller clinics serving communities across the county. More information can be found on [SMCH's website](#).

Is Your Child Afraid of Needles?

According to the CDC, vaccinations are the most common source of procedural pain for healthy children and can be a stressful experience for persons of any age. The CDC estimates that up to 25% of adults have a fear of needles, with most needle fears developing during childhood. Fear of injections and needlestick pain are often cited as reasons why children and adults refuse vaccines. There are a lot of resources to help individuals conquer their fear. The Cleveland Clinic [shares some tips](#) to help parents address their children's fears.

Recording of Webinar on Vaccines for Youth

If you missed last week's informative webinar for families about vaccinations for children and youth, you can view the [recording here](#). The webinar included Dr. Bonnie Maldonado from Stanford University, SMCOE's Deputy Superintendent Marco Chavez, and several pediatricians. The event was conducted in Spanish with English interpretation.

Tracking Vaccination Rates of Children – and Adults

San Mateo County Health reports that it hopes to report data on vaccination rates of children ages 5 to 11 on its website later this week. The State is updating its reporting system, and once that is in place, the county will be able to access the immunization registry. SMC Health's vaccination dashboards have a wealth of information, including this one with [vaccination demographic information](#).

Here's to more good news in the weeks ahead. Join me in celebrating and honoring America's veterans for their willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.



Nancy Magee
San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools