

COVID-19 Vaccination Program

Victorian update

April 2022

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Department
of Health

VICTORIAN COVID-19 UPDATE: 20 APRIL 2022

67.1% have received 3 vaccine doses (18+)

94.5% have received 2 vaccine doses (12+)

3,476

Doses at state sites yesterday

6,176,733

Doses at state sites total

437

Hospitalised

34

ICU (active + cleared)

12

Ventilated

14

Lives lost

10,628

New cases

Rapid **7,440**

PCR **3,188**

15,868

PCR tests

53,518

Active cases

1800 675 398
coronavirus.vic.gov.au



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What has changed?

1. COVID-19 Winter Dose
2. In-home vaccination services
3. Change to the definition of COVID-19 Vaccination status
4. It's a Mob Thing – First Nations Health and Music Festival

COVID-19 Winter Dose

What has changed?

- The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has approved a 'winter dose' of COVID-19 vaccine for selected cohorts at greatest risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and who have received their primary vaccination and third dose.

Who is eligible?

- Those eligible for a winter dose are 1) people aged 65 years and older, 2) residents of aged care and disability facilities, 3) people aged 16 or over who are severely immunocompromised & 4) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 years and older.

COVID-19 Winter Dose

When can eligible people receive a winter dose?

- Eligible people will be able to have their winter dose four months after receiving their third dose or from four months after a confirmed COVID-19 infection, if an infection has occurred since the person's third dose.

A note on co-administration

- Eligible people will be able to receive their COVID-19 vaccine winter dose at the same appointment as their flu vaccination.

In-home vaccination support

Who is eligible??

- 5 to 11 year olds can get vaccinated at home for any of their doses if they have a disability or underlying health condition
- 12 to 15 year olds can get vaccinated at home for their:
 - first or second dose, and
 - third dose, if they have a disability or underlying health condition
- 16 to 59 year olds can get vaccinated at home for their:
 - first or second dose
 - third dose, if they have a disability or underlying health conditions, and
 - fourth dose, if they are severely immunocompromised
- All people aged 60 and over are eligible to get vaccinated at home for their:
 - first, second or third doses
 - Fourth doses for people who are eligible (people aged 65 years and over or are severely immunocompromised)

Change to the definition of COVID-19 vaccination status

- ATAGI has recommended the definition of fully vaccinated against COVID-19 **changes from ‘fully vaccinated’ to ‘up to date’.**
- People aged 16 and over who have received all three vaccinations will now be considered up to date.
- People aged 16 and over who have **not received their third dose within six months of their previous dose will now be considered ‘overdue.’**
- People aged five to 15 years will be considered up to date once a primary course of vaccination is complete.
- The change in status will not apply to international travellers arriving in Australia.

| Vaccination terminology | | |
|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| | ✓ three doses of COVID-19 vaccine | ✗ fully vaccinated |
| | ✓ third dose of COVID-19 vaccine | ✗ up to date vaccination |
| | ✓ up to date | ✗ booster dose |
| | ✓ overdue | ✗ booster |
| | ✓ one dose | ✗ booster shot |
| | ✓ at least two doses | |
| | ✓ at least your second dose | |
| | ✓ vaccination for children aged 5 to 11 | |
| | ✓ vaccination for children aged 5 and over | |

It's a Mob Thing – First Nations Health Music Festival

- OUSS Entertainment, in partnership with Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and First Peoples Health and Wellbeing are hosting a free music and health festival for members of the first nations community.
- Event is community led and organised event to help promote First Nations Health programs and projects and support First Nations businesses and artists.
- Welcome the support of General Practice promoting to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients
- Regional events to be announced shortly.



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COVID-19 Vaccination Program 5-11 Parents and Guardians Survey Results

April 2022

For all enquiries on survey results please contact: vaccinationsurvey@health.vic.gov.au

The Department of Health would like to acknowledge the contribution of Open Advisory Pty Ltd towards the analysis of the 5-11 Survey results.



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First state-wide survey of perceptions of 5-11 COVID-19 vaccinations

About the Survey

- The Department of Health launched the **first state-wide survey of parent and guardian attitudes and perceptions towards COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 5-11 in Victoria**
- The data gathered in the survey will enhance the pathways and resources that support parents and guardians to make decisions about COVID-19 vaccines and vaccination services for 5-11 year olds
- The survey questions were informed by:
 - Existing best practice surveys (BAS, CARE, Burnet Institute)
 - Review of literature, sentiment and guiding World Health Organisation BeSD Conceptual framework
 - Market research questionnaires
 - Focus groups with key informants including A/Prof Margie Danchin, Priority Communities Team, and LPHUs

Who

- The survey was targeted to parents and guardians of 5-11 year old children across Victoria
- The survey underwent **Hemingway Review** in order for Grade 3 English language proficiency.
- The survey was translated in **eight priority languages** as informed by communities with low vaccination uptake and directed by the Priorities Communities Team

Distribution

- The voluntary online survey was live from **3 – 17 March 2022**
- Survey was distributed to a contact list of over **2100 Department of Health stakeholders** including Ambassadors, LPHUs, LGAs, Aboriginal and CALD sectors, and staff
- The survey was promoted on **DH social media channels** with paid advertising to increase visibility
- **DET further endorsed and distributed** the survey through school and principal networks

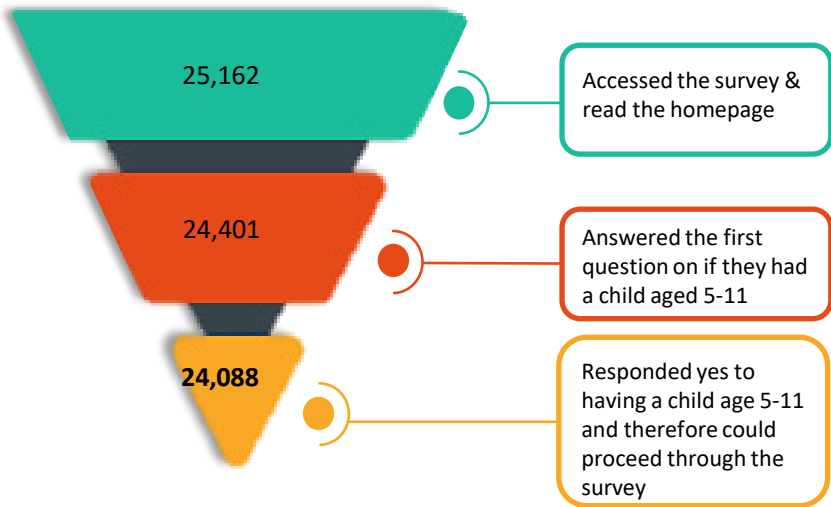


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Over 265,000 impressions across Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram

The first Victorian survey of parent/guardian sentiment regarding COVID-19 vaccination for 5-11 year olds

SURVEY RESPONSE RATE



24,088 survey respondents identified that they were a parent or a carer of a child aged 5-11 and went on to complete the survey.



This represented 4.3% of the Victorian population aged 5-11.

Demographics of the Survey Respondents who identified as having child aged 5-11 ¹

- **70%** of respondents identified as **female**
- **89%** of respondents were **aged 30 and over**
- **71%** of responses were from **metropolitan Melbourne** with a further **20% from regional & rural Victoria**
- **7.5%** have a **child with a disability** or a medical condition that places them risk of severe COVID-19 illness
- **0.97%** identified as **Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander**
- **17.8%** of survey respondents **spoke a language other than English** at home with a further 311 surveys completed in another language
- **15%** had a **child that tested positive for COVID-19** in the past month

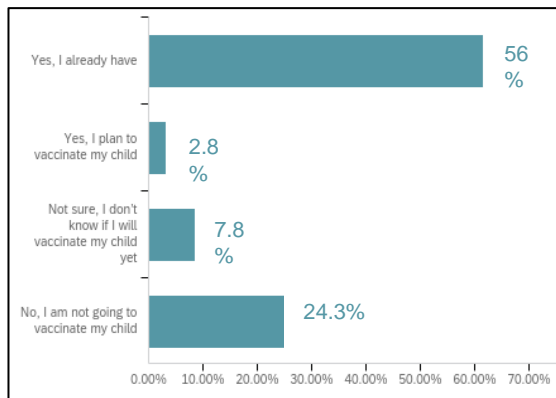
¹ Survey data includes blank responses in the denominator of percentages as questions in the survey were not mandatory

Most parents who intend to vaccinate their child have already done so

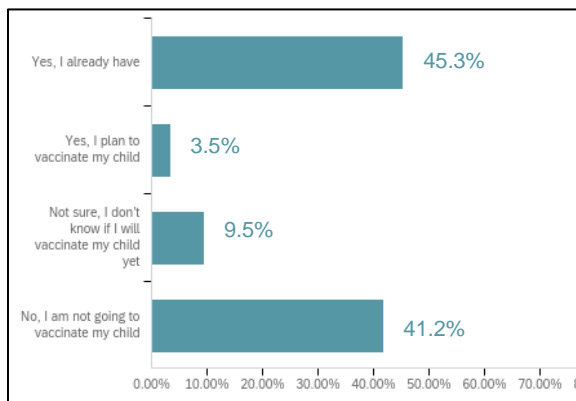


Do you plan to vaccinate your 5-11 year old child against COVID-19?

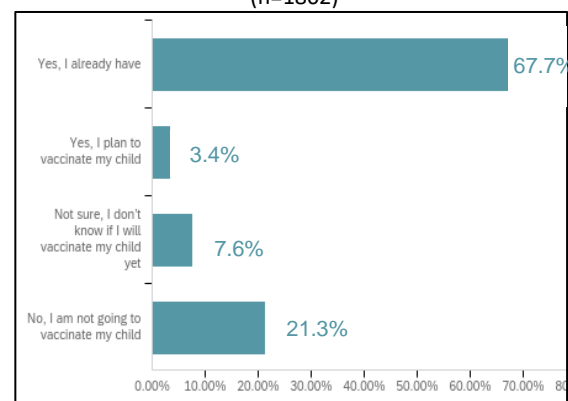
All survey respondents
(n=22,888)



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Respondents (n=232)



Parents / Carers of Children with
a Disability or a medical condition
(n=1802)



- The responses largely align with the vaccination rate for the cohort, with a slight bias towards responses from parents who have vaccinated their children.
- ~3% of parents are reporting that they still intend to vaccinate their children. 7.8% of parents are 'not sure'
- A greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents are reporting no intention to vaccinate their children

Intention to vaccinate varies across metro / regional areas and disadvantage (SEIFA)

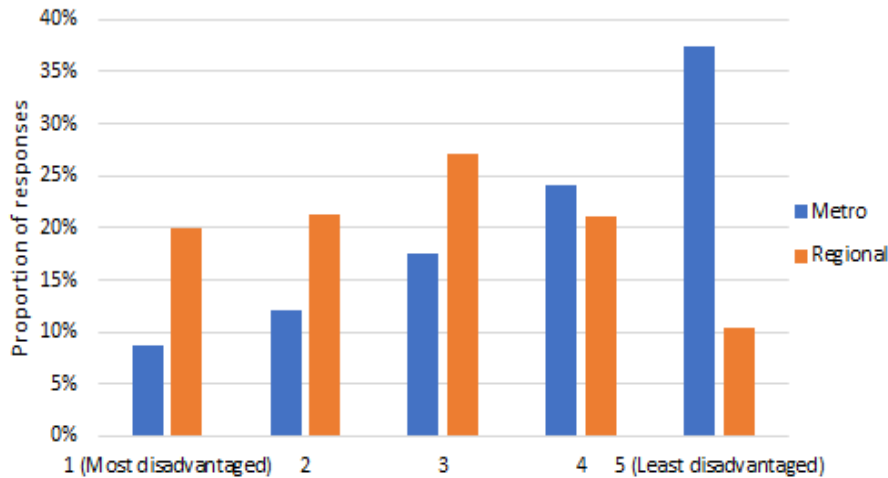


The trend in intention to vaccinate is variable across locations with a higher proportion of responses from the least disadvantaged areas metropolitan areas “already have or intending to vaccinate their child” and higher proportions of responses “Not sure or Will not vaccinate” from the most disadvantaged areas.

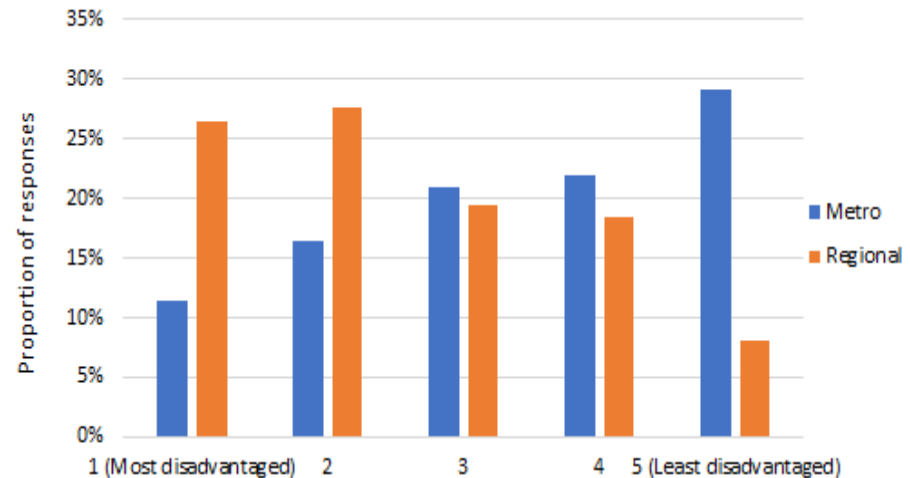


A notable proportion of those who are ‘not sure or will not vaccinate’ can also be seen in least disadvantaged metropolitan areas

Intention to vaccinate “Yes, I already have” or “Yes, I plan to vaccinate my child” by disadvantage area (SEIFA IRSD) and location of residence



Intention to vaccinate “Not sure, I don’t know if I will vaccinate my child yet” or “No, I am not going to vaccinate my child” by disadvantage area (SEIFA IRSD) and location of residence



59% of survey respondents indicated they had or planned to vaccinate their child



Where did survey respondents vaccinate their child?

- Majority of these respondents vaccinated their child at the **General Practice (45%)** and **State run vaccination site (36%)**



Did respondents find it easy to book their child's vaccination appointment?

- **75% of respondents found it easy to book their child's vaccination appointment**
- 15% of respondents did not find it easy to book a vaccination appointment, this varied by location of vaccination with 17.5% disagreeing with the statement from State-Run Centre locations and 13.7% disagreeing with it from GP or Pharmacy locations



Did respondents feel they had enough information to feel confident to vaccinate their child?

- **86%** of survey respondents felt as though they had all the **information they needed to feel confident to vaccinate** their child

OPEN
TEXT

What further information would make you feel more confident to vaccinate?

- Survey respondents still expressed **concern for long term safety** of the vaccine and still requested the **need for better evidence on the benefits and risks** of the vaccine as it relates to their child.

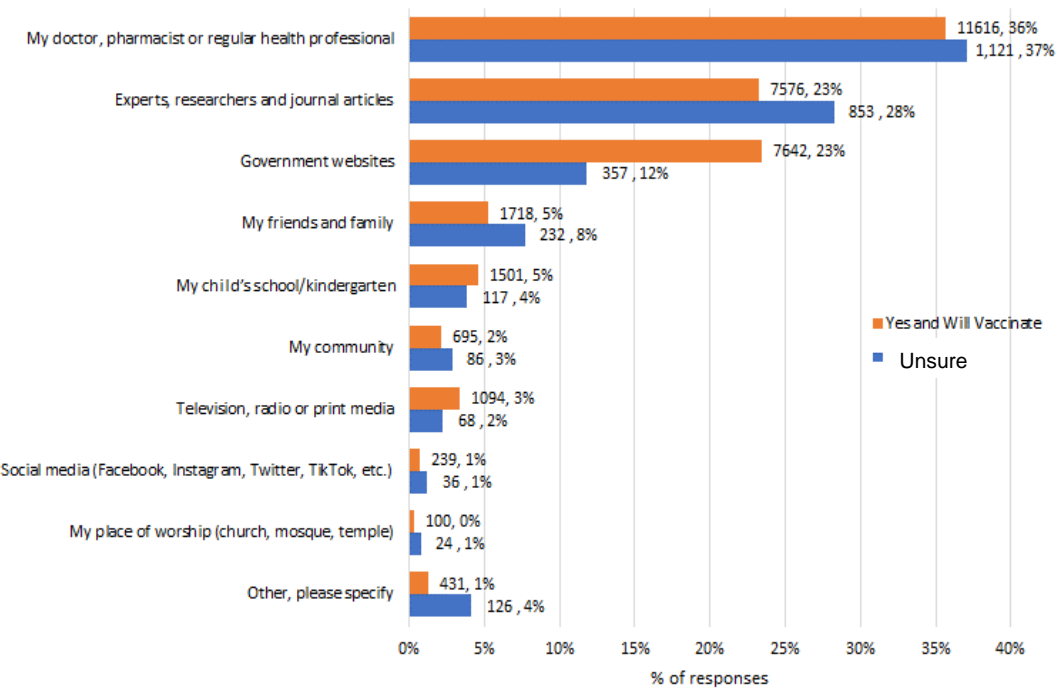
"I am still worried about the long term side effects of the vaccination as they are unknown. I still don't know if vaccinating my child was the right decision. If I can get more information to prove that Covid-19 vaccinations are safe, I would feel more confident." (Respondent who had vaccinated their child)

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GPs and Experts were identified as the most trustworthy sources of information for those who had vaccinated and were unsure



What sources of information do you trust the most to receive COVID-19 information?



Those who have vaccinated their children or plan to

- Health professionals and experts are highly trusted, as well as the Government Website
- Highly trusted resources include those of Royal Children's, Murdoch Research, ABC and Coronacast/ Dr Norman Swan

"RCH did great panel talks posted on their FB page that I referred to." (Respondent who had vaccinated their child)

Those who are unsure:

- For those who are unsure, health professionals and experts are still the mostly highly trusted
- Trust in government website is slightly lower than for those who have vaccinated their children

"Why would I vaccinate my child from covid when I have seen children catch covid and nothing happens to them. That's ridiculous in my eyes." (Respondent who was unsure about vaccinating their child)

For those who are unsure (8%), a range of information was needed to make people feel more confident to vaccinate the child



Survey respondents who were unsure about the decision to vaccinate their child, motivation was driven by **personal experiences with COVID-19**, and questions on **effectiveness of the vaccine** at reducing disease transmission. **Many perceive that the risk of the side-effects of the vaccine are greater than the risk of COVID-19 illness for their child.**

“Why would I vaccinate my child from covid when I have seen children catch covid and nothing happens to them. That's ridiculous in my eyes.”

Factors that would make parents more confident

- Information from experts and health professionals about my specific concerns about vaccination (52%)
- Information about the sickness in children caused by COVID-19 (45 %)
- Information about how effective the COVID-19 vaccines are (43%)
- Information about how vaccination works when a child has already had COVID-19 (42%)

Access actions identified that could make it easier to vaccinate their child

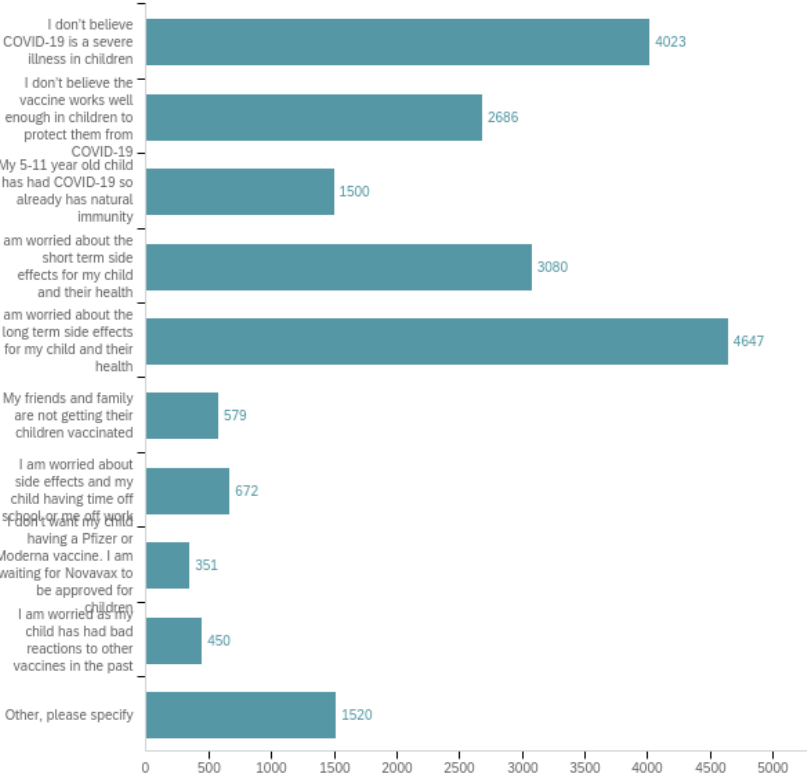
- Improving the access to vaccination outside of school and work hours
- Aligning vaccination programs with school vaccination programs, and conducted during school hours
- Increasing access close to where people live or work

Free text comments supported the finding that **access and convenience are not the key barriers for most of these parents**

24% of respondents do not want to vaccinate their child



Why did you choose not to vaccinate your child?



Concerns about long term side effects, and beliefs about the severity of COVID-19 in children are the main reasons given by parents who report they will not vaccinate their children



When asked if anything could motivate them to vaccinate their child majority felt *nothing will change my mind* to vaccinate their child. Some raised longer term safety data, Novavax availability and understanding the impact of COVID-19 sickness in children were perceived as motivational factors to get their child vaccinated.

Government mistrust was prevalent across many open text responses.

Survey reflections

- The results from the survey have highlighted the value and importance of building **trust and confidence**
- Further information on **vaccine effectiveness and safety** were identified as primary drivers to motivate parents and carers to vaccinate their child **for those who have already vaccinated and unsure whether to vaccinate their child**
- The survey has identified a clear role for **experts and health professionals**, especially in primary care, to deliver vaccinations and provide **accessible, consistent and transparent information and advice about vaccinations.**
- The survey has also highlighted for those who are unsure and who will not vaccinate challenges with **joint-decision making among parents/guardians and the desire for non-mRNA vaccines** (i.e., Novavax)
- The results have noted an **increasing mistrust in government as intention to vaccinate decreases**
- **Intention to vaccinate varies across regional / metropolitan areas and SEIFA locations.** Noting respondents from higher areas of disadvantage are more likely to not vaccinate their child
- To the Department of Health's knowledge this is the **first state-wide survey of** parents and guardian sentiment regarding COVID-19 Vaccination for 5-11 year old children

Examples of functional materials that are being updated to reflect these findings

Vaccination program function resources and collateral are being progressively updated to reflect the findings from this survey and other 5-11 review activities.

- **Safety reporting communications messaging (including better accessibility)**
- **Resources outlining the similarities with other vaccines rather than differences**
- **Profiles of the availability and effectiveness of different vaccines rather than being vaccine neutral**
- **Vaccine hesitancy conversation guides, including resources for parents with divergent views**
- **Contact Centre Scripts (FAQ / IVR options / resource sharing via SMS/ review all scripting incl. outbound calls)**
- **Profiles of experts/ specialists on websites, including Royal Children's, Monash Children's and Maternal and Child Health**
- **Stakeholder pack for 235+ Ambassadors and partners, including First Nations 5-11 stakeholder pack review**