



Dear Parents/Caregivers,

We have been teaching the children about the importance of proper hand washing to help keep germs from making them sick. The children have learned that washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is the best way to wash off the “glitter germs” that the teachers sprinkled onto their hands.

As a parent, you know that although hand washing helps to stop the spread of germs, vaccines are one of the best ways to help protect your child from serious diseases. But did you know that it is also important for you and every member of your family, including grandparents, to keep your own vaccinations up to date?

Three vaccines that are particularly important to discuss with your healthcare provider are the Tdap, flu, and COVID-19 vaccines.

Whooping Cough

Whooping cough is a very contagious and serious disease that can be deadly for babies. In recent years, there have been large outbreaks of whooping cough in the United States. Whooping cough may appear as a common cold in many teens and adults, and many people who are contagious with the illness may not even know they have it. In fact, when experts were able to identify how a baby got whooping cough, they determined that in most cases, someone in the baby’s household got the child sick.

Tdap Vaccine

The Tdap vaccine helps protect older children, teens, and adults against tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough. **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that all children receive a Tdap vaccine when they are 11-12 years old. Adults 19 years and older should get a Tdap vaccine once if they did not receive it when they were younger. It is also very important for pregnant individuals to get a dose of Tdap during the third trimester of every pregnancy. The vaccine will help protect both them and their baby from whooping cough.**

Flu

Flu can be serious, particularly for pregnant people, young children, older adults, and those with chronic medical conditions. Even healthy people can get a serious case of flu, leading to hospitalization or even death. During the 2019-2020 season, the flu killed tens of thousands of people, including 199 children, here in the U.S.

Flu Vaccine

The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for all members of your family 6 months of age and older.

This includes adult family members such as grandparents, older brothers and sisters, close family friends, and babysitters. Remember, it’s important to get vaccinated against the flu **every year**. It takes two weeks after getting the vaccine for protection to start. If you are pregnant, getting vaccinated against the flu will help protect both you and your baby. While the vaccine varies in how well it works each season, it is still the best protection we have against flu, and it can reduce your family’s risk of serious flu illness, hospitalization, and even death.

COVID-19 and COVID-19 Vaccines

COVID-19 is a very contagious and very dangerous disease that has caused over 700,000 deaths in the U.S. alone. **Safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines are available and recommended for everyone 5 years old and older.** (For the most up-to-date information on COVID vaccines, visit [VaccinateYourFamily.org/covid19faq](https://www.vaccinateyourfamily.org/covid19faq).)

VACCINATE YOUR FAMILY

We understand you may have questions and we encourage you to find the answers, and learn more about vaccinations, by visiting [VaccinateYourFamily.org](https://www.vaccinateyourfamily.org). There you will also find links to the CDC’s recommended vaccination schedules, so you can make sure everyone in the family is up to date with their vaccinations.