



Renfrew County and District Health Unit  
*"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"*

## For Immediate Release

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(Pembroke, Ontario, 10:00 a.m., December 13, 2021)

### **The Importance of Vaccinating Children Aged 5 to 11**

Over 1,500 children across Renfrew County and District (RCD), aged 5 to 11 have received the COVID-19 vaccine. "While this is great news, only an additional 1,000 of the remaining 6,000 children who are eligible have been registered for vaccination in December," states Dr. Robert Cushman, Acting Medical Officer of Health, Renfrew County and District Health Unit. "Many spots are available, and we encourage families to sign up," continues Dr. Cushman.

There has been a sharp increase in COVID-19 cases among children in RCD. Since September, RCDHU has reported 36 cases in the 5 to 11 year old age group, almost 1 in 5 of all cases reported across RCD. "These children are by far our most susceptible age group," says Dr. Cushman.

While COVID-19 symptoms tend to be mild in most children, in Canada, there have been over 300 hospitalizations, 50 ICU admissions and 2 deaths. "Parents need to be reminded that any child requiring hospitalization for COVID-19 will be transferred to CHEO, says Dr. Jason Malinowski. "On top of all the worries, travel would be a major inconvenience especially at this time of year," continues Dr. Malinowski.

Over the past few weeks RCDHU has reported a growing number of COVID-19 cases in settings such as schools, sports teams, and workplaces. This then leads to rapid spread amongst household members, both vaccinated and unvaccinated. The impact that the isolation period can then have on families while having to stay home is significant. Isolating in the home means time away from work, schooling, recreational and social activities, not only affecting families mentally and physically, but also financially. These are strong reasons to have all eligible children vaccinated.

"With people gathering indoors due to colder weather, Christmas, and the holiday season fast approaching, vaccination is our best defence to allow families to get together and celebrate safely," finishes Dr. Cushman.

For more information, visit RCDHU's website at <https://www.rcdhu.com/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-2/>.

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