OHIO AAP RESOURCE TOOLKIT

Resources for Ohio School Nurses to Promote Pediatric Care

Distributed by:

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American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®
INTRODUCTION

We recognize that during the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been many changes and challenges for all. As we head into the upcoming school year, it is imperative that we are equipped and prepared for the new challenges it might bring. Feeling ready for the year ahead is great way to handle the stress and uncertainty we have all been feeling while also promoting public health. As a part of the school administration and staff, school nurses are in a unique position to see and interact with families and students on a regular basis. Reminding parents and caregivers to continue seeing their pediatrician for routine well care, receive vaccinations, and educate about potential health concerns are a few of the ways school nurses can help ensure the health and safety of children and adolescents.

This toolkit provides important information and resources that will help schools nurses and staff educate families and promote pediatric care. Ohio AAP believes in the value and importance of well-child visits and values our partnership with Ohio school nurses and the role we both play in maintaining the health and well-being of Ohio’s school children.

Please visit OhioAAP.org/covid19resources for the most up-date information on COVID-19 recovery or https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/school-nursing-program/welcome/ for relevant resources for school nurses.
TEMPLATE LETTER TO FAMILIES

Nurses can use the letter below as a customizable template to send to families encouraging them to return to the pediatrician’s office for well-child visits and vaccinations.

>To download an editable version, click here.

Hello from [Insert School Name],

We hope that this letter finds your family safe and healthy! We know the past few months have been hard and forced us all to make many changes, but the care and safety of Ohio’s children is still very important.

Now is a great time to check if your child is prepared to head back to school. Be sure to schedule a yearly visit with your child’s pediatrician so they are healthy and ready to go! **Your doctor’s office is safe. Experts recommend keeping in-person well visits.** Doctors’ offices are using personal face masks and gloves, keeping healthy and sick visits separated, and using telephone or video for remote visits. These temporary measures follow advice from the Center of Disease Control and the Ohio Department of Health.

It is especially important for children and teens it to stay current on vaccines, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Well child visits help protect your child from disease and check for physical, developmental, nutritional, and mental health risks.

Please call your doctor’s office to schedule an in-person appointment if your child is due for their annual visit or vaccines. Call their office to check their records if you are unsure of your child’s last visit and vaccine schedule.

The [Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics](https://www.ohioaap.org) (Ohio AAP) is a great resource for questions or concerns. Ohio AAP works to educate and advocate on behalf of children, families, and pediatricians in the state. The organization includes 3,000 Ohio pediatricians who are enthusiastic and committed to caring for all of Ohio’s children.

**Where to Find Ohio AAP**

- Facebook: AAP Ohio
- Twitter: @ohpediatricians
- Instagram: Ohio AAP
- Linked-In: Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Sincerely [Insert School Name]
POST CARD FOR FAMILIES

In addition to the letter, we have also created a postcard that can be sent to families encouraging them to return to their pediatrician’s office for well-child visits and vaccinations.

To download the PDF version, click here.

Front & Back
1. Well-Child Visit Introduction
   a. Students are heading back to school. Now is the time to schedule your child’s annual well visit. The Ohio AAP recommends in-person, routine well child visits, even during #COVID19. These visits allow you to monitor growth and development, vaccines, mental health in adolescents, and get your questions answered.
   b. Only 20-30% of patients are seeing their pediatricians, but the health of children is as important as ever! Make sure your child is ready for the upcoming school year by scheduling your child’s wellness visit with their pediatrician today!
2. Safety Features Implemented in the Office
   a. Do you have concerns about the safety of your pediatrician’s office? Offices have many new ways to keep you and your child safe. Separating sick and well visits, eliminating waiting rooms, and wearing protective gear. Call your pediatrician today to schedule your child’s visit or if you have additional questions or concerns.
3. Immunizations
   a. Immunizations are safe and protect us all from diseases that can be prevented. Ensure your child is ready to go back to school and up to date on their vaccines. Schedule your regular in-person well-child visits with your pediatrician today.
   b. Staying updated on vaccines is important to prevent diseases. During the week of April 5th: measles, mumps and rubella shots dropped by 50%. Diphtheria and whooping cough shots dropped by 42%. HPV vaccines dropped by 73%.
4. Mental Health/Safe Firearm Storage
   a. Severe stress and anxiety are risk factors for teen suicide. Many have experienced these feelings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Your pediatrician can help address mental health, anxiety, or depression and provide resources. Do not skip your teen’s well visit
   b. With teens spending more time at home, parents should continue to ensure they #StoreItSafe for potentially dangerous items including firearms, medications, and alcohol. Learn more at http://ohioaap.org/storeitsafe/
5. Developmental Screenings
   a. Screenings for development are important parts of a well-child visit to check the progress of a child’s movement, language, behavior, and emotions. This is especially true for those who might be at more risk due to previous health issues or their environment. Do not delay your child’s well-care visit.
6. Preschool Vision Screening
   a. Help your preschooler succeed! Pediatricians screen children age 3-6 for health issues that are important in for starting school such as vision screenings. Do not skip these important appointments.
   b. Preschool vision screenings are given during routine well child visits. These screenings can help prevent learning difficulties, emotional issues, neurological problems, and developmental delays.
SMOKING & VAPING CONCERNS

Smoking and vaping usage has always been a concern for adolescents, but in this COVID-19 era, it can pose an even bigger risk. Smoking and/or vaping is a risk factor for many respiratory infections and can increase the severity of respiratory diseases. Because COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that primarily attacks the lungs, adolescents who smoke or vape may have a harder time fighting off the virus. The rack cards below can be used for teen and parent usage to discuss some of the dangers of vaping and resources to help quit.

Teen Resource Front & Back

Parent Resource Front & Back
SPORTS PHYSICALS

A return to school could also mean a return of sports and after school activities for adolescents. The Ohio High School Athletic Association recently made an important announcement on their recommendations for pre-participation sports physicals for the 2020-2021 school year. OHSAA guidelines are recommending:

- Requiring an annual pre-participation physical exam every 13 months for all 7-12 grade students
- Strongly discouraging the use of mass physicals for the upcoming school year and all students receive their pre-participation physical in a private setting
- Strongly recommending physical exams be done at a medical home

If families and caregivers have additional questions on the differences between well care visits and a sports physical, please feel free to use the below graphic. Sports physicals are helpful in identifying a physical or medical issue that could make participation a risk but are not the same as receiving a well care visit.

We hope you found these resources and information helpful for you, your school, and the children and families you serve. As you continue to provide care for Ohio’s children, Ohio AAP will continue to work around the clock to provide support through updated news and information, and relevant resources and content. If you should have additional questions or comments, please contact Ohio AAP CEO, Melissa Wervey Arnold, at 614-846-6258 or via email at marnold@ohioaap.org.