

# #SafePedsHealthyKids Resource Toolkit

## Ohio Chapter

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# Ohio AAP

## #SafePedsHealthyKids

### Resource Toolkit

Resources for Providers and Organizations to Promote Pediatric Wellness & Preventative Care

**Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**  
Human Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that commonly cause mild to moderate illness like the common cold. Almost everyone gets infected with one of these viruses at some point in their lives, and most of the time the illness lasts for a short amount of time. A new human coronavirus, called the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV), was discovered in Wuhan City, China, in December 2019.

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**SYMPTOMS:**  
SORE THROAT, COUGH, FEVER, HEADACHE, RUNNY NOSE, DIFFICULTY BREATHING

**TRANSMISSION:**  
PERSONAL CONTACT, CONTAMINATED OBJECTS

**PROTECTIVE MEASURES:**  
WASH HANDS: Utilize a greater than 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.  
AVOID TOUCHING: eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.  
STAY HOME: when sick and keep your immune system strong by eating healthy foods, drinking plenty of water and getting enough rest.  
CLEAN AND DISINFECT: household objects and surfaces in your home.  
COVER COUGHS: and sneezes with tissues that are immediately thrown away.

**STAY HEALTHY, ACTIVE, CONNECTED, & ENGAGED DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.**  
MEASURE and communicate with your child.  
Take social media BREAKS.  
Keep a healthy and productive SCHEDULE.  
STAY ACTIVE. Physical activity can help manage stress.  
Schedule VIRTUAL PLAY using free apps like Zoom or Google Hangout.

For more information from Ohio AAP, the CDC, and other trusted sources, please visit: <http://ohioaap.org/covid19resources>

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We recognize that during the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been many changes to pediatric practices and Ohio AAP members. Many pediatricians have had to make adjustments to office processes and policies, such as scheduling, and modifying exam and waiting room areas to reduce the potential exposure and spread of COVID-19. Practices are monitoring and assessing the effects of these changes regularly and often adjusting what they have done to meet current needs, limitations and evolving guidelines. We know that every practice is different and must decide when and how to open their offices to patients in the safest ways possible.

This toolkit builds on the work that has been done thus far and is meant to provide pediatricians with easy to use resources to reach out to families. Ohio AAP believes in the value and importance of well-child visits and the role preventative care has to keep children healthy #SafePedsHealthyKids.

**While you were on the front lines, Ohio AAP worked hard to lead efforts on preserving and protecting pediatrics during the COVID-19 pandemic:**

- 24/7 advocacy with ODH, administration, Medicaid/MCO leaders, national AAP to ensure the pediatric voice is heard when decisions are being made-including telehealth reimbursement policy parity and pediatric office care
- Provided talking points to Dr. Amy Acton/Ohio Department of Health for the April 27, 2020 press conference on the importance and safety of routine well visits during the pandemic
- Virtual visits by Ohio AAP staff with practices to help navigate COVID-19 operational needs
- Quick changes to QI program timelines and education/training dates and formats to adhere to the needs of our members and orders from Gov. Mike DeWine and Dr. Amy Acton
- Called upon by Dr. Amy Acton to provide Ohio AAP resources for families on routines, anxiety and wellness during COVID-19
- Creation and spread of a social media tool kit and campaign for families and providers on the safety of routine well care and office visits during the pandemic, #SafePedsHealthyKids. (pages 4-6)
- We created videos to enforce the need for routine well care and immunization visits during the past few months on multiple social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok to reach providers, parents and teens
- We sent Ohio AAP press release to media outlets across the state on routine well care and immunization visits during the COVID-19 pandemic

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- Ohio AAP educated nearly 115 providers in a series of 3 webinars in April/May addressing relevant concerns currently affecting issues on telehealth, well-care/immunization visits, clinical challenges, physician wellness and planning for life after COVID-19

Please visit [OhioAAP.org/covid19resources](https://OhioAAP.org/covid19resources) for the most up-date information on COVID-19 recovery or [Groundworkohio.org/covid19parents](https://Groundworkohio.org/covid19parents) for relevant resources for parents and caregivers.

## TEMPLATE LETTER TO FAMILIES

Providers can use the letter below as a customizable template to send to families encouraging them to return to the office for well child visits and vaccinations.

*To download an editable version, click [here](#).*

Hello from [Insert Practice Name],

We hope that this note finds you and your family safe and healthy! We want to thank you for being flexible and understanding as we adjust office protocols to keep patients and families as safe as possible during this unprecedented pandemic.

Currently, stay at home orders from Governor DeWine are still in place but **in-person well-child visits with your pediatrician are still recommended at this time**. To this end, we have adopted some new practices such as [insert changes made such as separate healthy/sick hours and rooms, triage in parking lot, telehealth, etc.]. It is our goal to see every patient that needs our services in a timely manner. If it is safe and appropriate, appointments may be delayed or conducted through telehealth. If an in-person visit is important and necessary, please rest assured that we are taking all precautions in cleaning of all equipment and examination rooms and limiting your contact with others.

**For all children and adolescents**, it is especially important to maintain regularly scheduled well check appointments to stay up-to-date on immunizations and health screenings despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Well-child visits and vaccinations for children and adolescents are necessary to monitor growth and help them build immunity to preventable diseases, as well as screening for developmental, nutritional and mental health concerns. If your child is due for a well child visit or sports/school physical, is due for a vaccine in the near future or past due, please call our office to schedule an in-person appointment. If you are unsure if your child is up to date or in need of a well visit or vaccine, please call and ask our office staff to check their records.

**For patients who are sick and require an in-person visit**, please call our office to schedule an appointment during our sick-patient hours. We request that sick patients be accompanied by ONE healthy parent or guardian

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and, if possible, that no siblings be brought along to the office. If appropriate, we may avoid in-person visits and treat patients through telehealth.

We have developed the following protocols for sick visits: [discuss specific procedures for sick patients such as calling at arrival and remaining in vehicle until you receive further instructions, payment and forms online, etc.]

These measures are temporary and are in line with guidance from the CDC and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). Policies will be adjusted as needed to follow direction by ODH and the CDC. We believe that the policies discussed above will help to maintain the best health environment for all of our patients.

Lastly, my membership and advocacy organization for how best to care for children and their families is the [Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (Ohio AAP). It is the strongest network of education and advocacy for children, families, and pediatricians in the state. The Ohio AAP encompasses 3,000 Ohio pediatricians and residents who are enthusiastic and committed to caring for all of Ohio's children and adolescents, including your family. Last year alone they directly impacted over 1M children through their programs and resources and reached over 174 million people nationwide in our awareness campaigns. They are my "go to" source for reliable, timely and important medical information for caring for children, and I hope they become yours as well. We encourage you to follow them on social media and visit their website, [OhioAAP.org](http://OhioAAP.org) for all of your child health needs.

#### Where to Find Ohio AAP

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

Visit <http://ohioaap.org/covid19resources> for messaging on safety and child wellness sharing on social media and use the hashtag **#SafePedsHealthyKids**.

Sincerely [Insert Practice Name]

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## POST CARD FOR FAMILIES

In addition to the letter, we also have a postcard that you can send to families encouraging them to return to the office for well child visits and vaccinations.

To download the PDF version, click [here](#).

*Front & Back*



**Don't Keep Distance**  
from Your Pediatrician

*Visiting Your Child's Doctor is Still Safe and Important*

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Immunizations

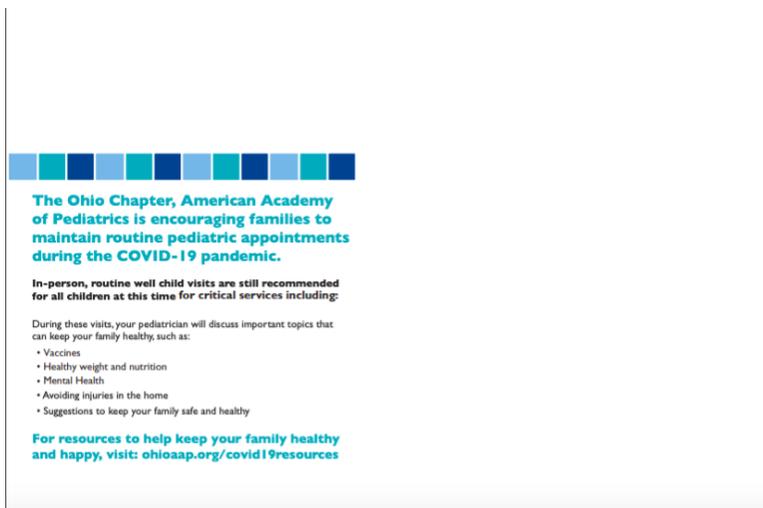
Mental Health

Screenings

Well-Child Visits

Ill Visits

Join the Conversation: [www.ohioaap.org](http://www.ohioaap.org) • 614-846-6258 • [@OHPediatricians](https://twitter.com/OHPediatricians) • [f AAPOhio](https://facebook.com/AAPOhio) • [t OhioAAP](https://twitter.com/OHPediatricians) • [i @OhioAAP](https://instagram.com/OHPediatricians)



**The Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics is encouraging families to maintain routine pediatric appointments during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**In-person, routine well child visits are still recommended for all children at this time for critical services including:**

During these visits, your pediatrician will discuss important topics that can keep your family healthy, such as:

- Vaccines
- Healthy weight and nutrition
- Mental Health
- Avoiding injuries in the home
- Suggestions to keep your family safe and healthy

**For resources to help keep your family healthy and happy, visit: [ohioaap.org/covid19resources](http://ohioaap.org/covid19resources)**

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## SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGING TO KEEP KIDS HEALTHY & SAFE

1. Well-Child Visit Introduction
  - a. Ohio AAP recommends in-person, routine well-child visits during #COVID19. Wellness visits allow for monitoring of growth and development, vaccine maintenance, mental health care in adolescents, and ability to have parent's questions answered #SafePedsHealthyKids
  - b. Pediatricians in some cases are only seeing 20-30% of their normal volume of patients but pediatrician's offices are safe places! Join Ohio AAP for the month of May in helping spread the word to schedule your child's wellness visit today and keep Ohio's children safe and healthy!
2. Immunizations
  - a. In-person, routine well-child visits are still recommended for all children during #COVID19, especially children under two years of age to maintain vaccination schedules. We must all do our part to prevent vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks #SafePedsHealthyKids #VaccinateDontIsolate
  - b. Keeping immunization rates up is imperative to preventing vaccine-preventable diseases. Researchers have found that during the week of April 5<sup>th</sup>, the administration of measles, mumps and rubella shots dropped by 50%; diphtheria and whooping cough shots by 42%; and HPV vaccines by 73% #SafePedsHealthyKids #VaccinateDontIsolate
3. Store It Safe
  - a. Maintaining wellness visits allows for mental health, anxiety, or depression concerns to be addressed in adolescents. Severe stress and anxiety – like the feelings caused for many by the COVID-19 pandemic – are risk factors for teen suicide. #SafePedsHealthyKids
  - 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/>
  - c. Now more than ever your teenager needs well care from their pediatrician. Many teens may be struggling with depression, anxiety, loneliness, hopelessness and some may be having thoughts of harming themselves during the pandemic. Pediatricians know how to help with these issues. Don't skip your teens well visit #SafePedsHealthyKids
4. Parenting at Mealtime & Playtime
  - a. Maintaining well child visits allows for monitoring of healthy habits especially for birth through 5 years. With extra amounts of time at home, advice from your child's pediatrician can help with obesity prevention and allow for monitoring for your child's health! #SafePedsHealthyKids
  - b. Parents should continue taking children to routine well visits to monitor their child's weight and eating habits. Pediatricians can provide health eating and activity tips for parents. It is important to limit screen time and encourage physical activity! #SafePedsHealthKids

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5. Smoke Free Families
  - a. Smoking puts families at risk for COVID-19 complications and puts infants at risk for lifelong health problems. Your doctor can provide information and resources to help reduce smoke exposure for your family. Don't skip well-child visits #SafePedsHealthyKids
6. Safety Features Implemented in the Office
  - a. Pediatrician offices are safe spaces. Practices have implemented many new measures to keep you and your child safe including separating sick and well visits between morning and afternoons, eliminating waiting rooms, and of course wearing Personal Protective Equipment #SafePedsHealthyKids
7. Brush Book Bed
  - a. Reading to children can create positive memories and routines in uncertain times. Nightly habits – like reading a book, brushing teeth, and consistent bedtimes – are one way to help kids and families maintain a sense of normalcy when many things are out of their control. Your pediatrician can also provide guidance on tips for oral health, literacy, and establishing routines so don't skip your well-child visits #SafePedsHealthyKids
8. Lead-Free Ohio
  - a. Maintaining routine well-child visits allows for education on lead poisoning and prevention for your child. Appointments with your pediatrician are still recommended to receive testing and guidance during COVID-19. #SafePedsHealthyKids

*Images for sharing on social media*



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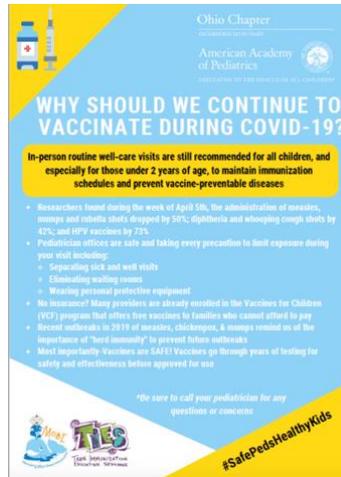
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## COMMUNICATION FOR PROVIDERS

- **Offer Empathy**
  - You've put your life and child's health on pause as a result of COVID-19 and we greatly appreciate your patience
  - Important restrictions that have helped save lives are now being loosened and it's time to turn our focus to your child receiving the care he/she needs
- **Provide Next Steps**
  - Your child's visit has been scheduled for <day, date, and time> at <location>. We are located at <address>.
  - Please let us know if you'd like to know more about the safety measures we have in place
- **Set Expectations**
  - As you prepare for your child's appointment, we want you to know that it is safe to come to our office, just as it has always been. We are taking every precaution to protect our patients families and team members. During your visit you can expect:
    - Continuous and thorough cleaning of all surfaces, spaces, and equipment
    - Masks and other necessary personal protective equipment for every person in our facilities
    - Screening and testing of all clinicians, team members, and visitors as recommended by our state and national policies
    - Social distancing practices enforced in public areas and visitor limitations
    - Up-to-date safety protocols based on the most recent guidance from ODH and the Governor's Office

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- **Provide Clear Guidelines**

- We are committed to making our office the safest environment possible and you can help. For your protection, as well as the protection of others, here are 5 simple things you can do in preparation for your visit:
  - Protect yourself and your child by wearing a face mask
  - Practice social distancing leading up to and during your visit
  - Call your provider if your child experiences symptoms such as fever, dry cough, sore throat, or shortness of breath prior to your visit to determine if it's safe to proceed with the appointment or if we need to get your child care in a different way
  - Let us know if there's anything we can do to assist you and/or your child before your visit

***Sample Messages for Staff to Call Parents:***

Well-Care/Vaccination appointments:

“Hi! This is (name) from (practice). I am calling to touch base regarding your child’s wellness visit and vaccinations. It is very important to stay on track with these appointments, as missing them can lead to issues later down the road. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, we are doing everything we can to ensure the health and safety of our patients, including helping families stay up-to-date on their important preventative care. Please give us a call so we can schedule your child’s appointment, if you have any questions or if there is anything we can do for you. We hope to see you soon.”

Newborn appointments:

“Hi! This is (name) from (practice). I am calling on behalf of everyone at (practice name) to congratulate you on the arrival of your baby. We are so thrilled for you and your family! As you may know, newborn checkups and on-time administration of vaccines are very important. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, we also know how crucial routine preventative care is for your child. We encourage you to keep your scheduled well-baby appointments or schedule one if you haven’t already done so. Please let us know if you have any questions or if there is anything that we can do for you. See you soon”

COVID-19:

“Hi! This is (name) from (practice). I hope that you and your family are in good health and staying safe. I am calling to let you know that all of us at (practice name) are thinking of you. We are here to support you during this unprecedented time. We have modified our practice policies to minimize our patients’ exposure to others

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and assure a safe environment for all. So please let us know if you have any questions or if there is anything else that we can do for your family. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, we are still seeing patients in the office for well-childcare, follow-up visits and sick visits, or by telehealth when appropriate. If you have any patient care concerns, please let us know. We hope to see you soon.”

#### Sick-child visits:

“Hi! This is (name) from (practice). I am calling to share some news with you regarding the services that we are offering to our patients. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, we are continuing to treat sick patients in a variety of ways. We are offering telehealth visits for concerns that can be treated virtually, or, if need be, in-person visits are available as well. Please don’t put off getting medical attention when your child needs it. Give us a call if you have any questions or if there is anything that we can do for you. Take care.”

## OPERATIONS PLANNING FOR VISITS

### Building Confidence

- Send proactive messaging to families about being open for care and practices in place to protect them  
assent infection
  - Consider messaging in a variety of formats (letter, phone call, text, social media)
- Evaluate sanitization and/or sterilization processes
- Prepare waiting room and clinic spaces appropriately for patients
  - I.e. Barriers in place between staff and patients where possible, plans for collecting paperwork, and making sure masks & hand sanitizer are available
- Appraise screening and testing of patients coming to the clinic for care
  - Pre-visit assessments by telephone and temperature checks prior to being seen

### Building Capacity

- Review appointment scheduling blocks to creatively allow for distance and cleaning
- Consider which types of visits may benefit from telehealth appointment versus in-person
- Schedule simultaneous “Well visit + follow-up appointment” as a joint visit OR use your current schedule flexibility to convert acute visits into a joint “Acute + well visit” when appropriate

### Building Efficiency

- Ensure every well visit includes all components of a sports physical assessment so sports forms can be signed for the full year

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- Consider dividing up patient loads to different providers to streamline flow
  - Telehealth vs. in-person care
  - Well visits vs. sick visits

## SUPPORTING FAMILIES: COMMON CONCERNS TO WATCH OUT FOR



We hope you found these resources and information helpful for you, your practices, 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 in recovery, updated news and information, and relevant resources and content for you all. 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](mailto:marnold@ohioaap.org).

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