

Teens and Vaccines Talking Points

Feel free to use these talking points to support your campaign and reach your peers and neighbors.

Talking Point: The Vaccine is Safe.

- The multiple studies that led the Food and Drug Administration to grant emergency authorization for the Pfizer vaccine found it 100% effective for people aged 12 to 15 and 94% effective for people aged 16 and up.
- The study in people aged 12 to 15 showed no side effects different than those seen in people aged 16 and up. Additionally, no one who took the vaccine in adult and teen/youth trials got severely ill, died or exhibited severe adverse side effects.
- The side effects of the Pfizer vaccine are similar to other vaccines that teens take to attend school and college, including the flu and meningitis vaccines.
- Side effects can be unpleasant or difficult for one or two days, but they will pass. The symptoms of COVID-19 and long-term effects of the disease on a person's health are exponentially more severe than those experienced after taking a vaccine.
- While health officials are looking into a small number of cases of myocarditis in teens who were recently vaccinated, the cases have not been conclusively connected to the vaccine and have not occurred in vaccinated people at a higher rate than unvaccinated people.
- While it's true that the COVID-19 vaccines were rolled out faster than other vaccines, each approved vaccine went through the same rigorous testing as other non-COVID vaccines and medicines. In the US, this process has produced safe and effective vaccines for the flu, polio, measles, mumps, pertussis and more. The technology behind the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines—mRNA—has been in development for **nearly 30 years** and has saved millions of people from getting sick and dying.
- Many pharmaceutical companies invested significant resources into quickly developing a vaccine for COVID-19 because of the world-wide impact of the pandemic. The emergency situation warranted an emergency response, but that does not mean that companies bypassed safety protocols or did not perform adequate testing.
- While childbearing may not be for years to come, COVID-19 vaccines are safe for all adults, including pregnant women. The CDC reports that there is currently no evidence that antibodies formed from COVID-19 vaccination cause any problem with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta. There is currently no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems—problems trying to get pregnant.



Talking Point: Teens Can Contract COVID-19, Too.

- Between March 1, 2020 and April 30, 2021, at least 1.5 million COVID-19 cases in people aged 11 to 17 have been diagnosed and were reported to the CDC.
- While most cases of COVID-19 in people under 18 are mild, 282 people between the ages 0 and 17 have died of the disease since March 2020, according to the CDC.
- While most cases of COVID-19 in people under 18 are mild, unvaccinated children and teens can transmit the virus to unvaccinated adults who are at higher risk of severe disease, complications and death.
- While all adults have been able to receive the vaccine since April, and the vaccine has been distributed to adults since December, not all are vaccinated; some have chosen to wait, may not get it at all, or have specific immunocompromising conditions that have kept them from receiving the vaccine. This means that unvaccinated children and teens could pass COVID-19 to adults in the above categories unintentionally through everyday interactions.
- Though it could vary from institution to institution, some schools, colleges and universities may require students to get vaccinated before the new school year. Some schools and colleges may instead require masks for unvaccinated students, but not for those who are vaccinated.
- COVID-19 caused schools across Georgia to use remote learning for months, up to more than an entire school year, because of the risk the virus presents to students, teachers and staff. This also limited extracurricular activity participation (sports, clubs, leadership opportunities) and cancelled many traditions that can be a defining part of our school experience (prom, homecoming, senior trips, in-person spirit days, theater and music performances, etc.).
- Long-haul symptoms of COVID-19 could last up to months or years after being diagnosed. These symptoms include chronic fatigue, brain fog, headaches, difficulty concentrating, dizziness upon standing, heart palpitations, depression or anxiety, reduced ability to exercise/physically exert oneself, and they can affect people who only experienced mild COVID-19 cases. These could severely affect your ability to play sports, work jobs that require frequent walking or physical activity and more.