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## Pediatric Immunizations are Important

*Immunization rates are dropping*

Benton-Franklin Health District (BFHD) encourages medical providers to continue vaccinating pediatric patients and following the [CDC Immunization Schedule](#). The number of immunizations given to children is dropping in both Washington State and nationwide during the COVID-19 pandemic. Slowing or stopping access to immunizations increases the risk of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease. Adding more outbreaks on top of COVID-19 will put more people's health at risk and could overload the health care system.

Parents may be nervous and concerned about taking their children in to a clinic. However, medical providers can help patients and their families feel safe by conducting visits in accordance with the Governor's "Stay Home, Stay Safe" orders and instructions to essential businesses. Continue to schedule your pediatric patients for immunization appointments to keep them updated with their immunization schedule.

Provider guidance on vaccinating patients during the COVID-19 pandemic is also attached.

If you need further guidance or assistance regarding immunizations, please contact the Washington State Department of Health Vaccines For Children Program at [wachildhoodvaccines@doh.wa.gov](mailto:wachildhoodvaccines@doh.wa.gov) or (360) 236-2829.