

## Sample Letter to Parents from Plans

Dreaming of a return to in-person schooling for your children or a summer family vacation?

Things are looking so much brighter in 2021. The rollout of COVID-19 vaccines is encouraging and will save lives. Vaccination has never been more important to protect our families and communities.

Now is the time to get your children caught up on routine immunizations they may have missed during the pandemic or are due for this year. **It's time to call your pediatrician or family doctor's office to schedule a yearly checkup for your child.**

In 2020, it was "stay home to stay safe". In 2021, clinics are safe, sanitized and socially distant. Medical offices have taken protective measures to make sure that visits can happen safely, including:

- scheduling sick visits and well-child visits during different times of the day
- asking patients to remain outside until it's time for their appointment to reduce the number of people in waiting rooms
- offering sick visits and well-child visits in different locations

**A safer return to school means vaccinating your child/children this spring with all recommended vaccines.** Preteens especially need to receive their recommended vaccines. Children ages 9 to 12 are due for 4 vaccines to protect against diphtheria, HPV-related cancers, meningitis, tetanus, and whooping cough.

Call to schedule a well child appointment today. For more information, visit *[insert organization's website info]*.

*Visiting your child's pediatrician or family doctor/provider is another way to keep your children safe from vaccine-preventable diseases. It protects your child, your family and your community.*

## Sample Letter from Health Plans to Health Systems/Providers

The United States faces a significant vaccination gap for school-age children, especially adolescents, due to the pandemic. Public childhood vaccine doses are down over 11 million doses for non-influenza doses as of late February 2021. NCQA posted a recent [blog](#) to draw national attention to the brewing crisis.

**We are calling upon our members to take swift and decisive action to bring in school-age children between March and May of 2021 to catch up on missed vaccinations and provide newly due vaccines.**

Vaccine rates for younger children are down 5-10%, but public sector doses for adolescents are down 17-21% according to the CDC. Considering that preteens ages 9-12 are due for four vaccines, it is crucial that we continue to provide protection against all vaccine-preventable diseases.

The urgency for action is also propelled by an emerging challenge. Should the COVID-19 vaccines be approved for children as young as 12 years old, as anticipated this summer, we face the possibility of an 6-8 week blackout period during the usual back-to-school vaccination season. Why? Current [CDC guidance](#) on provision of COVID-19 vaccines to ages 16 and older notes that no other vaccines should be provided two weeks before or after the series.

Please join us in activating your health system, patients, and the public to schedule their adolescent well child visits between now and the end of May.

### Actions You Can Take:

- Communicate to families about
  - office safety measures
  - availability of appointments
  - importance of annual well child visits and immunizations
- Enact patient reminder/recall efforts
  - pull overdue patient lists
  - pull newly due patient lists
  - proactively outreach to patients via multi-pronged communication channels
- Recommend all [ACIP- recommended vaccines](#) at every visit

You are a trusted source of care to your patients. For more information on these efforts, consult [*insert weblinks to resources to share*]. In addition, the National HPV Vaccination Roundtable has resources available [here](#).