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Mike Faust, Director  
Douglas A. Ducey, Governor

## COVID-19 Coronavirus - Caregiver Message #30 **UPDATE** - Youth Vaccinations

*This letter is being updated due to a change in CDC recommendation regarding youth vaccinations*

May 20, 2021

Re: Vaccination of Children in Care aged **12+**

Dear Caregivers,

The Department remains committed to providing timely and accurate guidance regarding mitigation of COVID-19 spread.

As of 1/15/2021 the FDA has granted Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for two COVID-19 vaccinations. The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine is the only vaccine approved for youth **12** and older.

The Department understands there are varying opinions regarding the vaccine, but the most valued opinion in this case belongs with the youth themselves. Please engage all youth **12+** and their treating physician to discuss whether they want the vaccine or not. For those wishing to have the vaccine, please use the following guidance:

### **Parental Consent**

- Parents **must** consent for the youth to receive vaccination, when eligible per the local county distribution plan.

### **Court Ordered**

- If a parent objects to vaccination, and the child requests it or a doctor recommends it, the Department shall file a motion with the Juvenile Court.

- In the event the youth is legally free, and with the youth's consent, the youth's GAL shall file a motion with the Juvenile Court.

#### **Treating Physician recommendation**

- Youth in care may be recommended for vaccination by their treating physician. The Department agrees that any eligible youth in this scenario can be vaccinated, either by Parental Consent or Court Order

#### **Congregate Care settings**

- Given the nature of this caregiver option, the Department agrees that any youth in this setting who wants to be vaccinated can be vaccinated.
- Congregate care facilities include Group Homes, Shelters, Behavioral Health Residential Facilities, Behavioral Health Inpatient Facilities, County Detention Facilities and State Correctional Facilities
- Caregivers may not require youth be vaccinated to remain in the home.

#### **Family-like settings**

- Caregivers may not require youth be vaccinated to remain in the home. If a **12+** youth does not wish to have the vaccine and there are caregiver concerns, please reach out to the DCS Specialist to discuss alternatives that can meet the needs of the family.

There will be scenarios not contemplated above. In those situations, the Department will review, provide guidance and then update communication accordingly. As new vaccinations are approved or Emergency Use Authorization is expanded, the Department will provide additional communication.

Sincerely,



Mike Faust  
Director

*Safety · Compassion · Change · Teaming · Advocacy · Engagement · Accountability · Family*

ABOUT DIRECTOR MIKE FAUST

Mike Faust is the Director of the Arizona Department of Child Safety.

Mike began his state career in September 2015 at the Arizona Department of Administration's Government Transformation Office. During this assignment he worked closely with the DCS leadership team to build the agency's management system, supported development and implemented the Department's strategic objectives and improvement priorities. Mike found working in child welfare to be extraordinarily rewarding. He officially joined the Child Safety team in December 2016 as Deputy Director where he continued to support strategic planning, projects and management system definition across state agencies.

Before joining the state, Mike spent over 15 years in the aerospace manufacturing industry in various capacities including general management, value stream management, manufacturing engineering and continuous improvement. Mike's hands-on approach and ability to practically apply lean manufacturing concepts to human services delivery has made a lasting impact on Arizona's child welfare system. Key contributions include the elimination of the 16,000 inactive case backlog, safe reduction of Arizona's out-of-home care population by 25 percent, and increased timeliness of service referrals.

#### ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY

The Department of Child Safety is dedicated to the vision that "Children thrive in family environments free from abuse and neglect." As highly motivated and caring public servants, the DCS team is committed to fulfilling this mission with excellence, providing safety and well-being for the most vulnerable population in Arizona - our children. If you suspect child abuse, call [888-SOS-CHILD](tel:888-SOS-CHILD).



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