PERMANENTE MEDICINE®
Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group

# COVID-19 Update for NASW

Dr. Mona K. Gahunia
Associate Medical Director
Infectious Diseases/Internal Medicine
February 2022



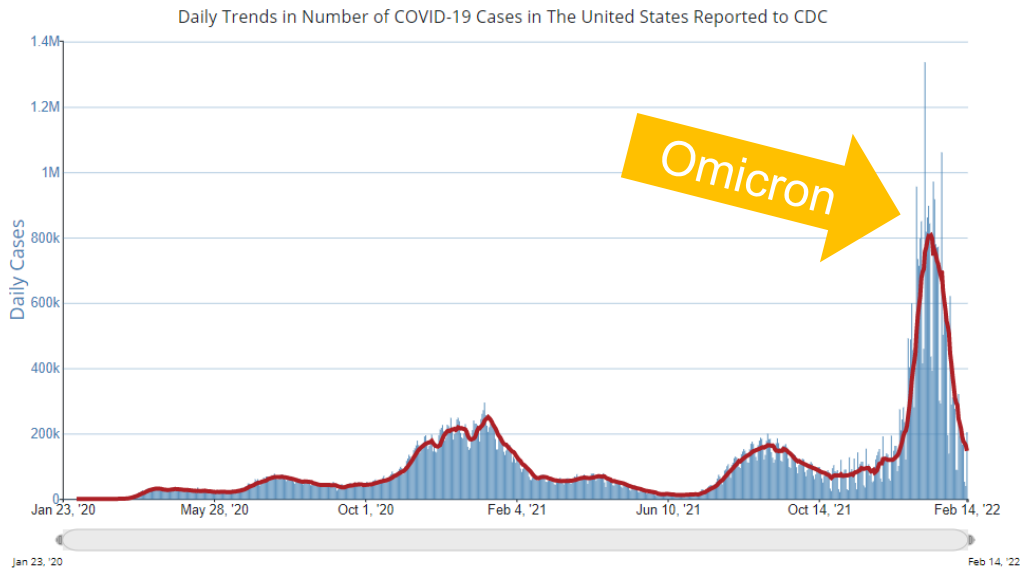
KAISER PERMANENTE®

# Current COVID-19 Landscape

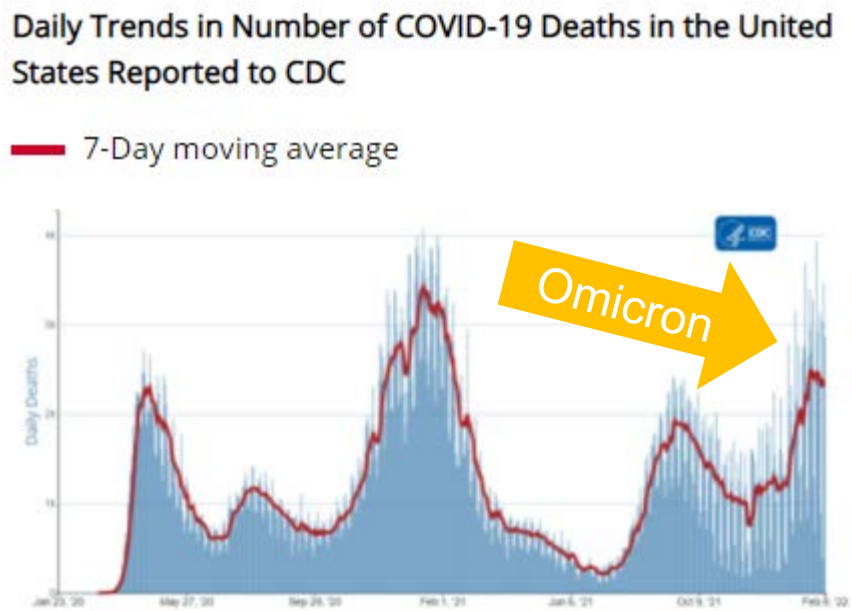
- Last met in November 2021
- As of February 10, 2022, Omicron is the predominant variant across the country.
  - Cases are dropping.
- COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in January 2022 were the highest since the beginning of the pandemic, fueled by the rapid spread of the Omicron variant.
- However, per a recent CDC study, severe outcomes during the Omicron period appear **lower** than during previous high transmission periods.
  - COVID-19 hospital stays were shorter, with fewer intensive care unit stays. Fewer deaths.
  - Why?

Source: CDC COVID Data Tracker Weekly Review. Trends Interpretive Summary for February 11, 2022. Accessed February 16, 2022. Available at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html#print

The blue bars show daily cases. The red line is the 7-day moving average of cases.



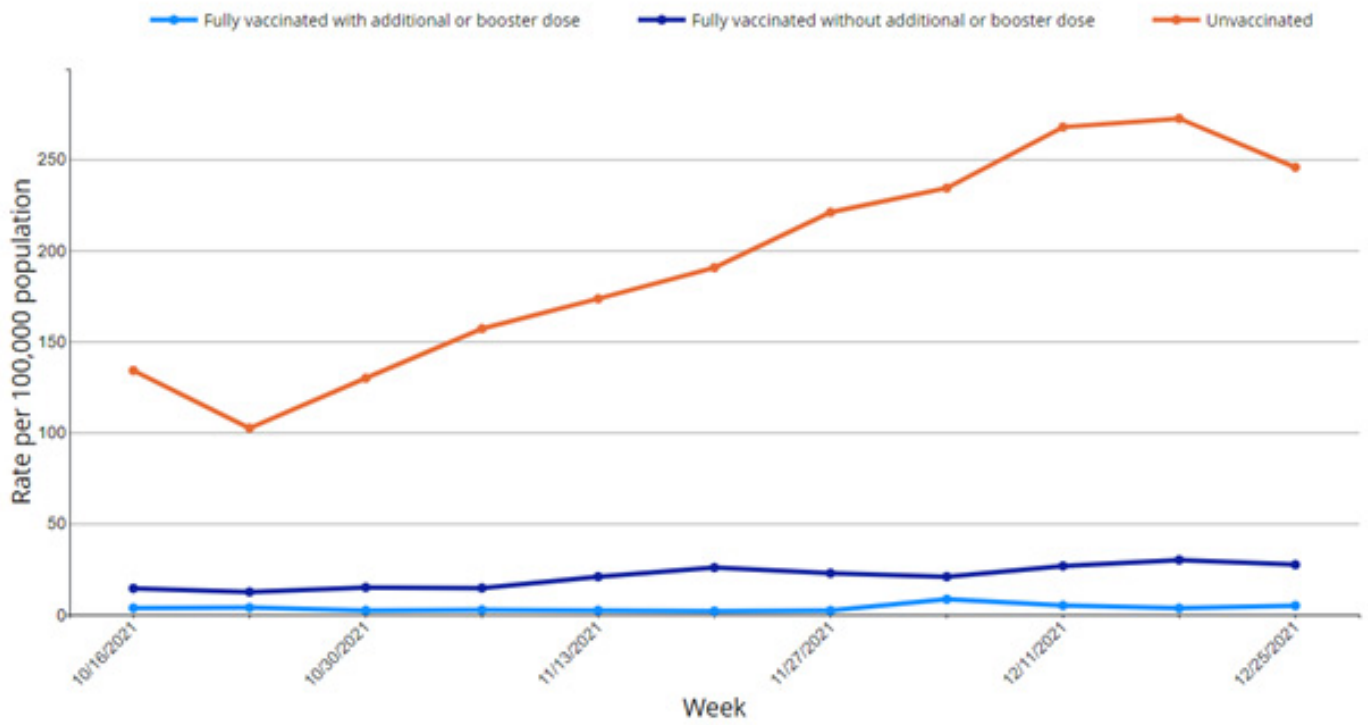

Source: CDC COVID Data Tracker. Trends in Number of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths in the US Reported to CDC, by State/Territory. Accessed February 16, 2022. Available at: https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends_dailycases



# Boosters Work!

- Omicron is less severe than previous variants, like Delta, especially amongst the **vaccinated**, but it should not be categorized as mild.
- CDC's hospital surveillance system found:
  - Among adults ages 50–64 years, the COVID-19-associated hospitalization rate in December 2021 among those who were unvaccinated was **45 times** higher than among those who were fully vaccinated and received an additional or booster dose.
  - Among adults ages 65 years and older, compared to persons who were fully vaccinated and received an additional or booster dose, rates of COVID-19-associated hospitalizations were **51 times** higher among adults who were unvaccinated.

## Hospitalization Rates by Vaccination Booster Status in Adults Aged ≥ 65 Years




Source: CDC COVID Data Tracker Weekly Review. Trends Interpretive Summary for February 11, 2022. Accessed February 16, 2022. Available at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html#print




PERMANENTE MEDICINE®
Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group

# What's Next?

**New variants are expected:** Viruses constantly change through mutation, and new variants of a virus are expected to occur. Sometimes new variants emerge and disappear. Other times, new variants persist. All variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 are being tracked in the United States and globally during this pandemic.

**Pandemic fatigue:** Best thing to do to protect yourself from COVID is to continue to follow key prevention strategies and be up to date on your vaccination

- Find ways to have community
- Allot time for things you enjoy
- Create a schedule
- Focus on what you can control





Source: CDC COVID-19. Understanding Variants. Available at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/understanding-variants.html

# Pandemic vs. Endemic

- An **EPIDEMIC** is a disease that affects a large number of people within a community, population, or region. It is actively spreading, and new cases of the disease substantially exceed what is expected.
- A **PANDEMIC** is an epidemic that's spread over multiple countries or continents.
- **ENDEMIC** is a disease that is a constant presence, like malaria in parts of Africa, or influenza in the US.

- COVID-19 is not yet endemic.
- When a disease is endemic, it is no longer unpredictably disruptive.
- Keep in mind that endemic does not imply it's not harmful or that its suddenly mild, just that it's much more stable and predictable.
- We need an equilibrium between level of transmission and level of immunity in the population
- Endemicity is geographic location-based
- Even endemic diseases such as Influenza can have shifts with new variants, so it's a fluid situation.
- Endemic diseases also still require important control measures including most importantly vaccination.




Source: Intermountain Healthcare. What's the difference between a pandemic, an epidemic, endemic, and an outbreak? Available at: https://intermountainhealthcare.org/blogs/topics/live-well/2020/04/whats-the-difference-between-a-pandemic-an-epidemic-endemic-and-an-outbreak

# COVID Vaccines

# Overview of Approved COVID-19 Vaccines for the General Population

- Pfizer's vaccine, branded as Comirnaty is fully approved by the FDA for people 16 years of age and older.
- Moderna's vaccine, branded as Spikevax, is fully approved by the FDA for people 18 years of age and older.

| Pfizer-BioNTech [1] | Moderna [1] | Johnson & Johnson's Janssen [1,2] |
|---|---|---|
| **Ages Recommended**<br>5+ years old | **Ages Recommended**<br>18+ years old | **Ages Recommended**<br>18+ years |
| **Primary Series**<br>2 doses<br>Given 3 weeks (21 days) apart [3] | **Primary Series**<br>2 doses<br>Given 4 weeks (28 days) apart [3] | **Primary Series**<br>1 dose |
| **Booster Dose**<br>Everyone ages 18 years and older should get a booster dose of either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (COVID-19 vaccines) 5 months after the last dose in their primary series.<br><br>Teens 12-17 years old should get a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine booster 5 months after the last dose in their primary series. | **Booster Dose**<br>Everyone ages 18 years and older should get a booster dose of either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (COVID-19 vaccines) 5 months after the last dose in their primary series. | **Booster Dose**<br>Everyone ages 18 years and older should get a booster dose of either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) at least 2 months after the first dose of J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine. You may get J&J/Janssen in some situations. |
| **When Fully Vaccinated**[4]<br>2 weeks after 2nd dose | **When Fully Vaccinated**[4]<br>2 weeks after 2nd dose | **When Fully Vaccinated**[4]<br>2 weeks after 1st dose |

Source: CDC COVID-19.

Source: CDC COVID-19. COVID-19 Vaccines for Moderately or Severely Immunocompromised People.

# Special Considerations for the Immunocompromised

## mRNA Vaccines (Pfizer/Moderna)

- A **3-dose primary series** is recommended for people ages 5 years and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised.
- A **booster** is recommended for people 12 years and older after completion of primary vaccination.
- This results in a total of **4-doses**.

## Janssen/J&J Vaccines

- A **primary** Janssen/J&J vaccine dose is recommended for people ages 18 years and older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised, followed by a **second** (additional) dose using an mRNA COVID-19.
- A **booster** is recommended for people 12 years and older after completion of primary vaccination.
- This results in a total of **3-doses.**

## Self-Attestation

- Immunocompromised individuals can **self-attest** if they are immunocompromised. Immunocompromised individuals should not be denied a 4th dose of COVID-19 vaccine if they do not have medical records documenting their health condition.

Table 3: COVID-19 vaccination schedule for people with moderate or severe immunocompromise*

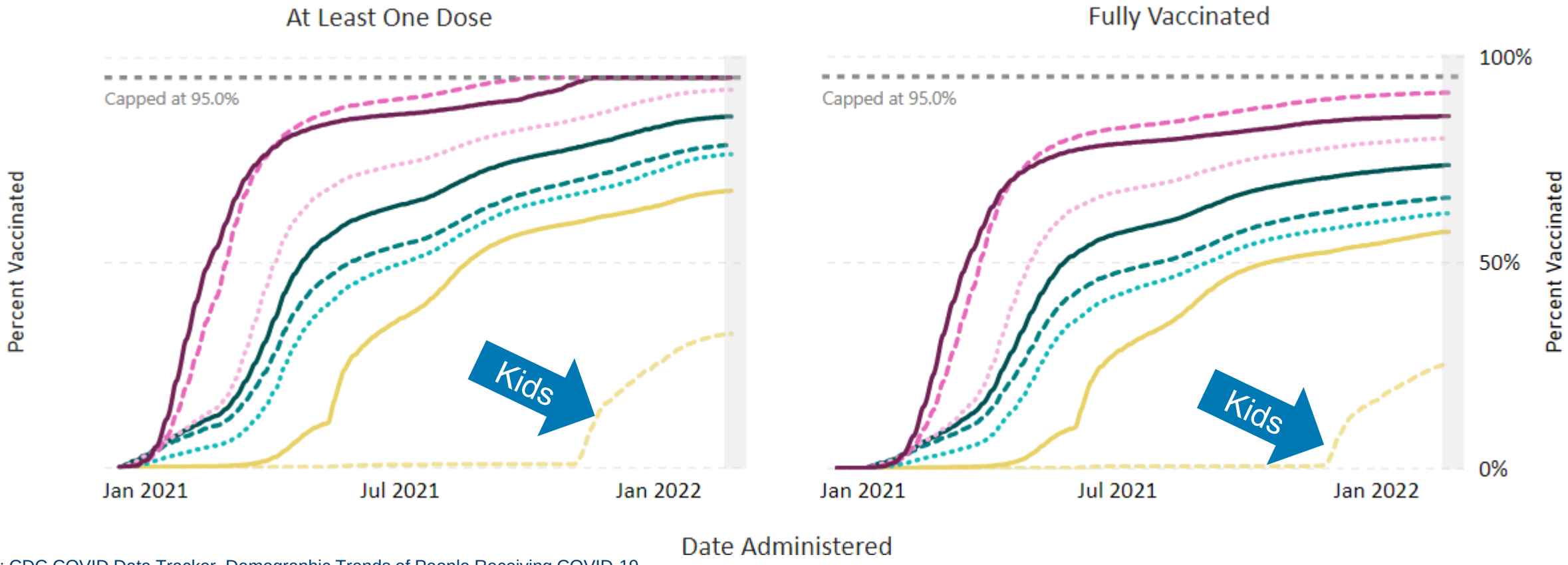
| Primary vaccination | Age group | Number of primary vaccine doses | Number of booster doses | Interval between 1st and 2nd dose | Interval between 2nd and 3rd dose | Interval between 3rd and 4th dose |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pfizer-BioNTech | 5–11 years | 3 | NA | 3 weeks | ≥4 weeks | N/A |
| Pfizer-BioNTech | ≥12 years | 3 | 1 | 3 weeks | ≥4 weeks | ≥3 months |
| Moderna | ≥18 years | 3 | 1 | 4 weeks | ≥4 weeks | ≥3 months |
| Janssen | ≥18 years | 1 Janssen, followed by 1 mRNA | 1 | 4 weeks | ≥2 months | N/A |

CDC recently shortened the interval between completion of a Pfizer/Moderna 3-dose primary series and a booster dose for the immunocompromised from 5-months to 3-months

# Percent of People Receiving COVID-19 Vaccine by Age and Date Administered, United States

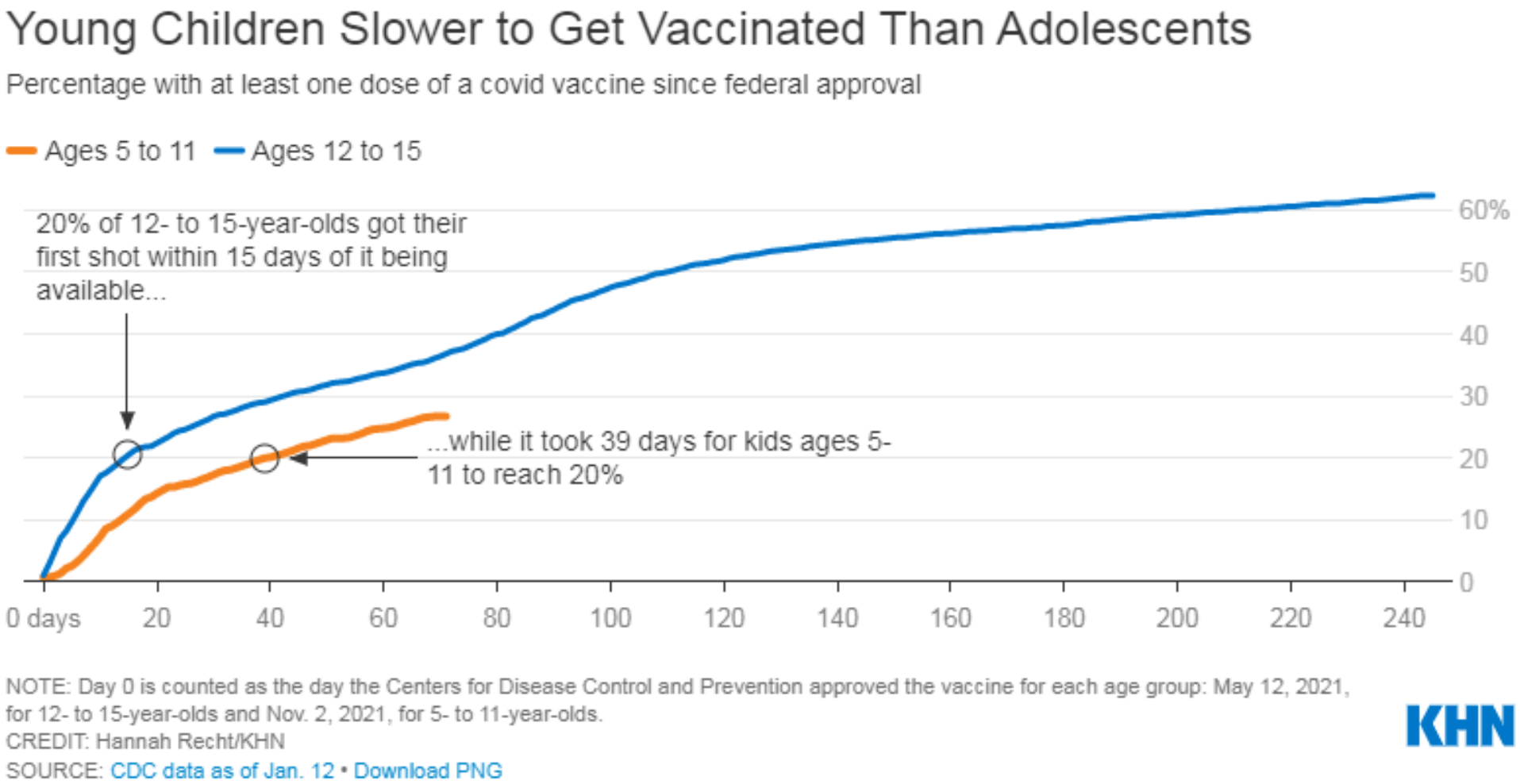
December 14, 2020 – February 22, 2022

| | 5-11 yrs | 12-17 yrs | 18-24 yrs | 25-39 yrs | 40-49 yrs | 50-64 yrs | 65-74 yrs | 75+ yrs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| At Least One Dose | 32.5% | 67.4% | 76.3% | 78.5% | 85.5% | 92.0% | 95.0% | 95.0% |
| Fully Vaccinated | 25.1% | 57.3% | 61.8% | 65.6% | 73.5% | 80.0% | 91.1% | 85.4% |




Source: CDC COVID Data Tracker. Demographic Trends of People Receiving COVID-19 Vaccinations in the United States. Accessed February 16, 2022. Available at: https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccination-demographics-trends

# Younger Children Vaccination Rates vs. Adolescents

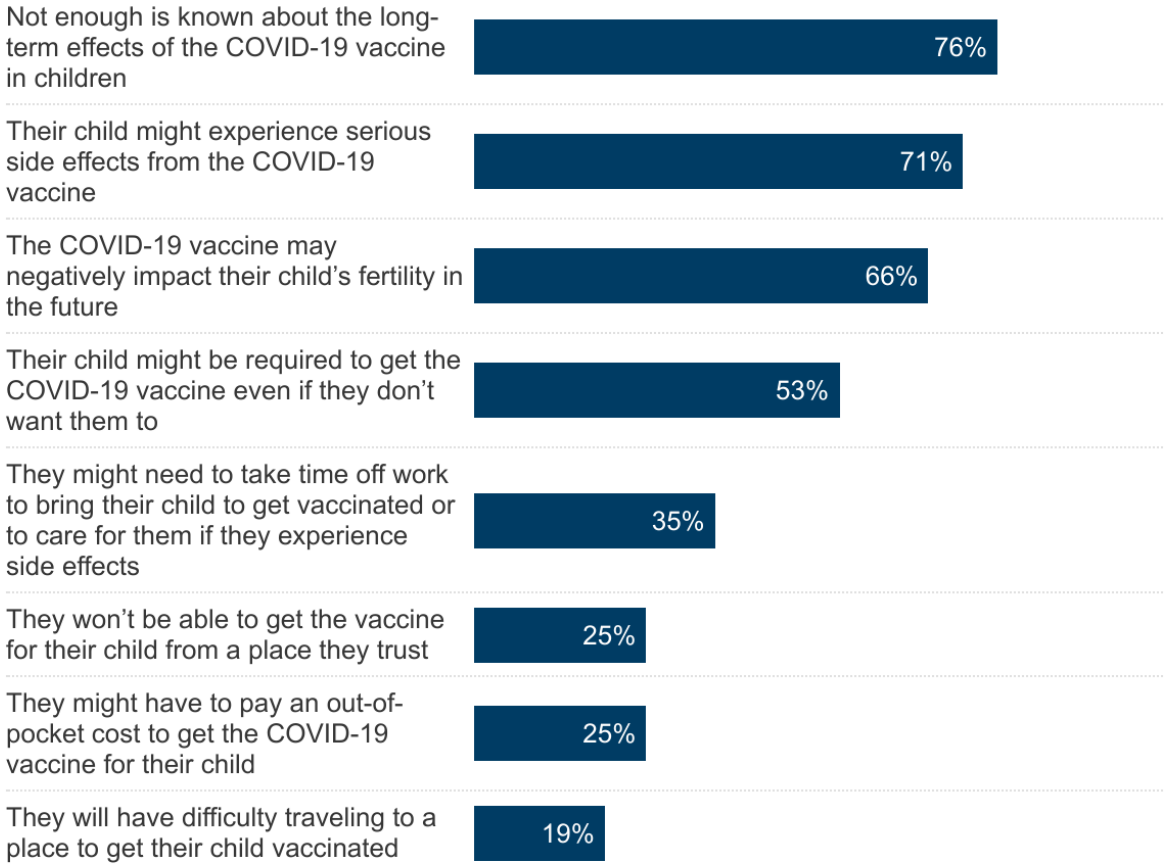



Source: Kaiser Health News. As Omicron Surges, Efforts to Vaccinate Young Children Stalls. Available at: https://khn.org/news/article/as-omicron-surges-effort-to-vaccinate-young-children-stalls/

Figure 2

## Long-Term Effects, Serious Side Effects, And Impacts On Fertility Are Among The Top Concerns Parents Have About Vaccinating Their 5-11 Year Old Child

Percent of parents of children ages 5-11 who say they are **very** or **somewhat concerned** about each of the following:




NOTE: Among parents or guardians of children ages 5-11. See topline for full question wording.
SOURCE: KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor (October 14-24, 2021)

KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor

Another common concern not listed in the figure:

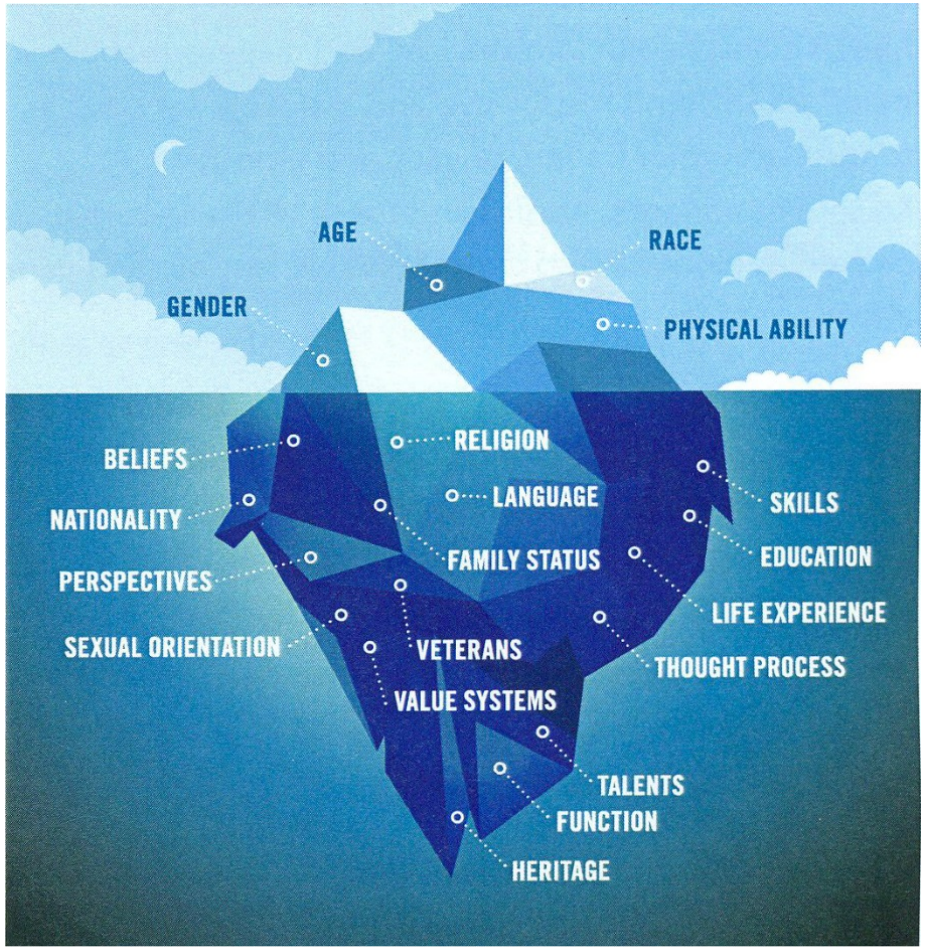
**Why get the vaccine if my child has already had COVID?**

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation. 2021. KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor: October 2021. Available at: https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/kff-covid-19-vaccine-monitor-october-2021/

PERMANENTE MEDICINE®
Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group

# Combatting Hesitancy Amongst Parents of Young Children

- **Time and experience with the vaccine will help**
- **Repeated conversations with trusted messengers**
  - Emphasize the safety of the vaccine: Serious side effects that could cause a long-term health problem are extremely unlikely following any vaccination, including COVID-19 vaccination.
    - Vaccine monitoring has historically shown that side effects generally happen within six weeks of receiving a vaccine dose.
  - Share some of the known risks of getting COVID in children:
    - Risk of myocarditis is much higher from COVID than from the vaccine
    - Children can get very sick and be hospitalized from COVID
    - Still learning about the long-term impact of the disease on adults and children
  - Share that the protection that someone gains from having COVID-19 illness varies greatly from person to person. Vaccine-based immunity is consistently very strong including those who had prior infection.




- **General tips:**
  - Listen first
  - Lead with empathy and follow it up with facts
  - Discuss your own experience
  - Help them identify their own reason for getting vaccinated
  - Help them find the vaccine – free to everyone

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation. 2021. KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor: October 2021. Available at: https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/kff-covid-19-vaccine-monitor-october-2021/
Source; World Health Organization. COVID-19 Vaccines Q&A. Updated January 2021. Available at: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-(covid-19)-vaccines?adgroupsurvey={adgroupsurvey}&gclid=Cj0KCQiA09eQBhCxARIsAAYRiymdeDTQs4rnzy5aXrFxHc7BRyR-rvyX4B_uBdXIsRjzMYEyMaEZnZAaAhSPEALw_wcB

# Despite the Protection Boosters Offer, Booster Take Up is Low

| Eligible People, No Booster Dose (updated Wednesdays) | Count | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Total | 84,755,218 | 50.2% |
| Population ≥ 12 Years of Age | 84,755,218 | 50.2% |
| Population ≥ 18 Years of Age | 77,736,597 | 48.9% |
| Population ≥ 65 Years of Age | 14,691,143 | 34.2% |

Source: CDC COVID Data Tracker COVID-19 Vaccinations in the United States. Accessed February 16, 2022. Available at: https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations_vacc-people-onedose-pop-12yr.

# Summary

- As health care professionals, we must balance people's desire to return to "normal" with what we know will keep them safe.
  - Lead with empathy and follow it up with facts:
    - The best way to protect yourself from COVID-19 is to get vaccinated, boosted, and continue to follow preventative measures like masking indoors and social distancing.
- We don't know what the "new normal" will totally look like, but eventually we will switch from pandemic to endemic.
- Much work remains in getting our youngest members of society vaccinated and getting more people boosted.

# Questions?