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Dear Parent/Guardian:

Re: Protect your child from the flu

Each year 20 to 30% of children get sick with the flu. Influenza is a virus. The infection spreads by droplets when talking, sneezing or coughing. Children can get very sick from a flu infection.

Influenza vaccines are free in Ontario for children 6 months of age and older. They are safe. The vaccine helps a child's immune system prevent flu but cannot give them the flu. The flu virus is always changing so a new flu vaccine is needed each year.

There are two types of vaccines for children 2 to 17 years of age. They are given as a needle or a spray in the nose. Canadian experts advise that either vaccine can be used in children of this age.

Getting the flu vaccine is the best way to prevent influenza infection. The vaccine is available at doctor's offices, health clinics and at Toronto Public Health clinics. Children 5 years and older can get the vaccine at a pharmacy.

Flu viruses can live on surfaces for hours, so clean your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rubs and avoid touching your face.

For more information:

1. Talk to your health care provider
2. Call our Immunization Line at 416-392-1250
3. Visit our [influenza website](#). Vaccine information is also available in other languages.
4. Book an appointment at a [Toronto Public Health clinic](#)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vinita Dubey".

Dr. Vinita Dubey, MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC
Associate Medical Officer of Health
Toronto Public Health