Immunizations are safe, effective, and save lives. They defend our families, community, and economy from infectious diseases.

Vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks are costly to our state and would further burden Texas’ public health systems already heavily involved in the COVID-19 response.

- **VACCINE EXEMPTIONS ARE ON THE RISE.**
  Texas allowed conscientious vaccine exemptions beginning in 2003. These exemptions have tripled since 2010-11.\(^1\)

- **SOME STUDENTS ARE MISSING REQUIRED SHOTS.**
  Some non-exempt students are still going to school without shots. Schools are inconsistently enforcing Texas’ “no shots, no school” law, which requires a school to exclude students from attendance if they are missing one or more required vaccinations and don’t receive them as fast as medically feasible.

- **KIDS FELL BEHIND ON VACCINES DURING COVID-19.**
  As a result of COVID-19, fewer parents took their children to well-child checks, preventing their child from staying on schedule with necessary vaccinations.

The Texas Vaccines for Children program provides vaccines for roughly half of children in Texas. According to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), the number of Texas Vaccines for Children doses administered in April 2020 decreased substantially (-43%) compared to the same time in 2019. Rates began to rebound somewhat in May (-24%) and June (-14%) – but remain well below 2019 levels.\(^2\)

- **POVERTY AND LACK OF HEALTH INSURANCE CONTRIBUTE TO MISSING VACCINATIONS.**
  According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, children who are uninsured and living below poverty level are most likely to be missing doses of recommended vaccines by their second birthday. The prevalence of being completely unvaccinated by age 2 is highest among uninsured children (4.1%), followed by Medicaid (1.3%), and privately insured (0.8%).\(^3\)

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\(^1\) Texas Department of State Health Services. (2020). Annual Survey of Immunization Status, 2010-2020. Available at: https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/coverage/schools/

\(^2\) Texas Department of State Health Services. (Sep. 2020). Impacts of COVID-19 on TVFC Vaccine Administration. Available at: https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/docs/COVID19impactTVFC.pdf

The Texas Public Health Coalition is a coalition of health professional organizations and health-focused organizations dedicated to disease prevention and health promotion.

MEMBERS

Alzheimer’s Association  
American Heart Association  
American Lung Association  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas  
Children’s Hospital Association of Texas  
The Cooper Institute  
Harris County Public Health  
The Immunization Partnership  
It’s Time Texas  
March of Dimes  
Methodist Healthcare Ministries  
Texas Academy of Family Physicians  
Texas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Texas Academy of Physician Assistants  
Texas Association of City & County Health Officials  
Texas Association of Community Health Centers  
Texas Chapter of the American College of Physicians Services  
Texas eHealth Alliance  
Texas Health Institute  
Texas Hospital Association  
Texas Medical Association  
Texas Nurses Association  
Texas Oral Health Coalition, Inc.  
Texas Osteopathic Medical Association  
Texas Pediatric Society  
Texas Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Texas Public Health Association  
Texas Renal Coalition  
Texas School Nurses Organization  
Texas State Alliance of YMCAs  
United Ways of Texas

RESOURCES

CANCER PREVENTION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS  
MD ANDERSON CANCER CENTER  
M_DUNDRELL CENTER FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES  
PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEALTHY TEXAS