

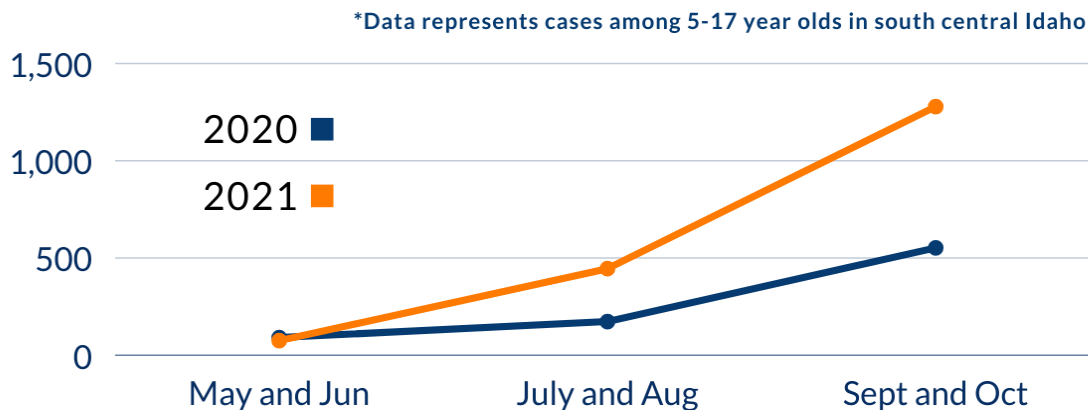
NEWS RELEASE--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 8th, 2021

COVID-19 vaccine appointments for children 5-11 open in south central Idaho, as record COVID-19 case numbers are recorded in children

SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO – South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) is now scheduling COVID-19 vaccine appointments for anyone five years and older. This comes as the area records a two-month high for cases reported in children.

“It is a relief to finally be at a place we can offer this protection for our kids,” said Melody Bowyer, SCPHD District Director. “COVID-19 infections in children more than doubled this fall compared to last. We want to bring normalcy back to our kids lives and to do that we need to slow this virus. Vaccination is the most effective way to do it.”



Data from the last two years show cases in school-aged children more than doubled in 2021 compared to 2020 (see the graph above). Cases in the region began

increasing slowly in June and July, when the Delta variant was introduced to the area, and sky rocketed after school started.

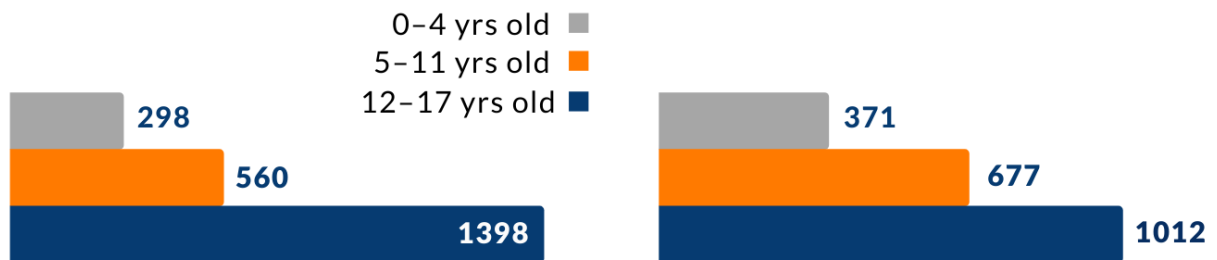
“We’ve been fighting against a variant that spreads more quickly and this fall we haven’t had as many precautions in place in our schools or communities to help slow it down,” said Bowyer. “Getting this vaccine out to our children is a crucial step in protecting them from disease.”

Comparing children’s COVID-19 case numbers from June 2021 to October 2021, the five months the Delta variant has spread through the community, with the 15 months before (April of 2020 to May of 2021) case numbers are nearly the same.

2,256 TOTAL CASES IN CHILDREN 0-17 DURING THE **FIRST 15 MONTHS** OF THE PANDEMIC.

2,060 TOTAL CASES IN CHILDREN 0-17 DURING THE **LAST 5 MONTHS** OF THE PANDEMIC.

The only age category that didn't see more cases in the last five months compared to the first fifteen are 12 to 17-year-olds. This age group has had access to the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine since June. Vaccination rates among teens are still low in the south central Idaho region, but the vaccine has helped slow disease spread among this age group compared to other adolescents.



**CASES BY AGE FROM
FEBRUARY 2020 TO MAY 2021**

**CASES BY AGE FROM
JUNE 2021 TO OCTOBER 2021**

“The purpose of a vaccine is to build our immune systems and protect us from severe symptoms that may cause hospitalization or death. There is a mountain of evidence showing the vaccines we have for COVID-19 are doing a great job of this,” said Logan Hudson, SCPHD Division Administrator. “Now we can extend that protection to more of our residents.

Resources:

Call to schedule a vaccine appointment in an SCPHD office: 208-737-5966

Search answers to frequently asked questions [here](#).

SCPHD is running two hotlines to help answer questions about COVID-19: one in Spanish, at (208) 737-5965, and one in English at (208) 737-1138. The hotline is open on business days from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.