CDC Expands Eligibility of COVID-19 Boosters for Youth

Category: Policy Blog
written by Sam Sears | June 10, 2022

On Thursday, May 19th, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) expanded eligibility of COVID-19 vaccine boosters for everyone 5-years and older. This expansion follows a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) and its recommendations. With this expansion of eligibility, the CDC recommendations for children are the following:

- Children 5-11 years old should receive a booster shot 5 months post initial series of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine
- Children 12 and older, who are immunocompromised, should receive a *second* booster at least 4 months after their first booster.

If you are eligible for a booster, be it the first or second dose of such, and you have not had one since December 2021, now is the time to do so. To see if you are eligible for a booster, click here.

COVID-19 and Native Communities

American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the height of it, AI/ANs were 3.5 times more likely to test positive, 3.2 times more likely to be hospitalized, and 2.2 times more likely to die due to COVID-19. Since the pandemic began, nearly 5 million kids, ages 5 to 11, have been diagnosed with COVID, 15,000 have been hospitalized, and over 180 have died.

Indian Country has had highly successful vaccine rollouts and Urban Indian Organizations (UIO) have been instrumental in the success of vaccinating AI/AN populations in urban areas. As of June 2022, AI/ANs have the highest vaccination administration rates in the U.S with 73% of AI/ANs having received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, according to CDC Vaccine Administration Data. As of June 2022, UIOs that use IHS vaccine distribution have administered over 174,105 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine and fully vaccinated 67,883 people.