

## **BROADCAST SCRIPT- A preventable problem: Kids and the need to vaccinate**

The American Academy of Pediatrics says COVID-19 cases among children and teens jumped 84% in one week's time with more than 72,000 kids acquiring the disease between July 22 and July 29. That's alarming pediatricians and medical providers including Dana DeShon, an APN for OSF HealthCare who specializes in Pediatrics.

DeShon recommends getting [pre-teens and teens vaccinated](#) now so children can be fully vaccinated in time for the new school year.

**“Now is the time we should be getting that vaccination to make sure that those kids that are 12 and older are protecting not only themselves and their family and those who they are around, but also their peers and younger kids who have not been able to get that vaccination because they're not eligible or old enough to get that.” (:22)**

Research shows the delta variant is at least twice as transmissible as other strains of the COVID-19 virus. There are also suggestions the delta variant could carry a much higher risk of hospital admission in unvaccinated individuals.

DeShon says as a medical provider, it's frustrating to learn about those deaths because kids are dying from a preventable disease.

**“It is definitely not as high of a percentage as what we would see in the older population, but I still think 400 is way too much more than we would see. It's double the amount we would see in an influenza season.” (:14)**

DeShon says the pandemic has also resulted in missed child wellness appointments and vaccinations for other infectious diseases. Globally, the number of missed vaccinations is staggering.

**“Statistically, I think we're still about 23 million doses behind for missing those vaccinations. We haven't seen anything lag like this since about 2009, so it's been a long time since we've seen any problems with this. And it's not just a United States problem, it's a worldwide problem.” (:20)**

Immunizations prevent 14 infectious diseases.

**“Those prevent about a million deaths in children per year. It also helps to prevent hospitalizations. Up to 8 million hospitalizations are prevented when we get those vaccinations.” (:15)**

Diseases that have been mostly eradicated, such as polio and meningitis, could return, DeShon says.

**“That’s always the concern – that if we are not catching up those kids in those areas that we should get those levels of vaccination rates, that we will definitely see surges of those diseases that have been far off for a long time, now coming back.” (:21)**

She advises, if you have concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine or any other immunizations, do your research and then speak with your child’s pediatrician or primary care provider.