



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohio Department of Health Stresses That Teens and Young Adults Are Crucial in Fight Against COVID-19

New guidance available for parents talking to young people about prevention

COLUMBUS – Lance D. Himes, interim director of the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), is calling on Ohio teens and young adults to take precautions to protect themselves and others against the dangers of COVID-19.

Himes said it is essential that young people stay home and away from others if they are sick, adhere to 6-foot social distancing and wear facial coverings when they go out. Avoid gathering in large crowds, huddling in groups, and sharing hugs or drinks.

“Young people have given up a great deal since this pandemic first hit and are eager to get back to normal,” Himes said. “I thank them for their sacrifices and urge them to create a new normal in which they find ways to safely socialize, wear masks, keep a safe distance, and look out for one another.”

ODH has prepared [guidelines for parents](#) and others for talking with young people about COVID-19. The guidelines include tips for preventing the spread and navigating new social norms. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also has produced a series of [fact sheets for young adults](#):

- [Wear a Cloth Face Covering to Protect You and Your Friends](#)
- [Help Protect Yourself and Others from COVID-19](#)
- [What Your Test Results Mean](#)
- [Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)
- [Do it for Yourself and Your Friends](#)
- [Stay Safe at the Pool/Beach](#)

The average age of people with COVID-19 in Ohio has been steadily decreasing, showing that more and more young people are being exposed, and have become ill. Even those who don’t experience symptoms or only mild ones can unknowingly carry the disease and pass it to parents, grandparents, or other family and friends who may become seriously ill.

Taking steps to prevent COVID-19 also shows appreciation and offers protection for essential workers who provide healthcare and deliver food, packages, and other items. Further, reducing the spread of the pandemic is critical to prevent hospitals from becoming overcrowded. Overcrowded hospitals and overburdened healthcare workers make it more difficult to care for patients in critical need—a grandparent suffering from COVID-19, an aunt having complications delivering a baby, a father with chest pain, or a friend hurt in a car crash.

“Teens and young people must do everything in their power to protect themselves, their families and friends, and all Ohioans against this very real and very serious threat,” Himes said. “You will save lives, prevent suffering, and help tame a pandemic that places all of us at risk.”

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