

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 27, 2020**

**The Kentucky Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics Encouraging Families to Keep Child Well Visits and Routine Vaccinations**

Frankfort, KY – The Kentucky Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (KY AAP) is encouraging families to maintain routine pediatric appointments during the COVID-19 pandemic. In-person, routine well child visits are still recommended for all children at this time, especially those under two who need to maintain their vaccination schedules. While this is the recommendation of the AAP, we recognize that there may be differences across states and advise you to follow your state's guidelines.

“There's a lot of hesitancy among parents and caretakers on whether they should keep their child's well visit or immunization during this time,” said Pediatric Critical Care physician and KY AAP President Dr. Scottie Day. “We need to make sure children remain consistent with their well visits and immunizations to avoid creating another public health problem while trying to manage COVID-19.”

During the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, public health officials made it clear that many non-essential procedures, surgeries and visits were postponed in an effort to preserve personal protective equipment, not because hospitals or doctor's offices are unsafe places to visit. Pediatric practices throughout the Commonwealth have protocols in place to keep well visits and sick visits separate. In an overabundance of caution, these practices have further adjusted their operations and policies to ensure patients and families are safe during office visits.

Many practices have reoriented their waiting areas to ensure that social distancing is observed while some are even seeing ill patients in their cars. All providers working in patient care areas are wearing personal protective equipment and are required to go through screenings before entering hospitals or offices. Families should call their pediatrician to inquire about what their practice is doing during this time to accommodate well visits, vaccinations and visits for other concerns.

“As pediatricians in Kentucky we dedicate our lives to the health and wellbeing of the children in this great Commonwealth,” said Pediatric Hospitalist and KY AAP Vice President/President Elect Dr. Jaime Pittenger. “Through this period of a “new normal,” we want to continue meeting the needs of children and families by providing the safest, most evidence-based and practical care as recommended by the AAP.”

In addition to maintaining important wellness checkups and vaccine schedules for children two years old and younger, parents are encouraged to take advantage of telemedicine appointments to discuss sickness and mental health concerns like anxiety and depression. Pediatricians can assess during a telemedicine visit if an in-person visit is needed based on each child's individual situation.

*The KY AAP promotes the health, safety and well-being of infants, children and adolescents so they may reach their full potential. For more information, visit [www.kyaap.org](http://www.kyaap.org).*

###