



MISSOURI CHAPTER of the
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS



MISSOURI ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS
STRONG MEDICINE FOR MISSOURI

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 7, 2020

Contact:

- Kelsey Thompson, MOAAP – 314-669-4806
- Kathy Pabst, MAFP – 573-635-0830

Missouri Pediatricians & Family Physicians Encourage Well-Care During Crisis

The Missouri Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (MOAAP) and the Missouri Academy of Family Physicians (MAFP) encourage parents to call their local clinic to check on immunizations and schedule well child visits. Pediatricians and family physicians are here to ensure every child is healthy and ready to return to school when the time comes. With the presence of COVID-19 cases in the state, pediatric and family physician offices have implemented protocols to ensure children and families stay safe while receiving routine well care.

With the anticipated return of school in the fall it is never too early to check immunization records. Immunizations are needed across the lifespan, including before kindergarten, continue throughout middle, high school and through retirement. Ensuring every child and adult is up to date with immunizations assists in reducing the risk of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease.

“Well child visits monitor a child’s growth and development, as well as provide important immunizations,” said Kristin Sohl, MD, FAAP, MOAAP President. “It is important to keep kids healthy during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Doctors across the state are stepping up precautions to ensure patient safety. For example, offices are bringing patients directly from their cars to a room, utilizing separate entrances, completely separating office space between sick and well visits, or holding well visits first and then sick visits later in the afternoon with additional cleaning procedures in between visits. These extra steps are being taken to prioritize patient safety and health. Clinics are adapting their office visit procedures in real-time based on up-to-date guidance.

“The COVID-19 pandemic is the perfect example of the need for and purpose of vaccines,” said John Paulson, DO, MPH, FAAFP, MAFP President. “Our patients deserve the best preventative care available, and immunizations should be a part of their treatment plan.”

Pediatricians and family physicians encourage families to continue using caution as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. The best way to decrease the spread of the virus is to stay home and continue physically distancing. It remains important to practice good hygiene with washing your hands. Additionally, pediatricians and family physicians recommend a face mask for children over the age of 2 if a child must go out in public. Face masks are not recommended for infants and small children under the age of 2. Adults are encouraged to wear a face mask in public to protect themselves and those around them from COVID-19.

Pediatricians and family physicians want families to be healthy during and after this crisis. Physicians want to hear from patients and assist with any health concerns. Parents are encouraged to contact their physician to discuss their child’s needs, schedule well child visits and check immunization records. As flu season draws near, it is important for adults and children to ensure they schedule a time to visit their physician when the seasonal immunization is available.

About the Missouri Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

The Missouri Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (MOAAP) is comprised of over 1,100 pediatricians from across the state. MOAAP’s mission is to promote the health of all Missouri’s children through advocacy, education, and collaboration. MOAAP is an organization incorporated in Missouri who

works closely with the American Academy of Pediatrics.

About the Missouri Academy of Family Physicians

Founded in 1947, the MAFP represents over 2,500 physicians and medical students. It is the only medical society devoted solely to primary care. Family physicians conduct approximately one in five office visits --that's 192 million visits annually or 48 percent more than the next most visited medical specialty. Today, family physicians provide more care for America's underserved and rural populations than any other medical specialty. Family medicine's cornerstone is an ongoing, personal patient-physician relationship focused on integrated care. MAFP is the state chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians.