

WHO Does Major About-Face on COVID Shots for Kids



The World Health Organization (WHO) on March 28 released new guidance on COVID vaccines classifying children aged 6 months to 17 years as a “low priority group.”

Following its meeting on March 20-23, the WHO’s Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) “revised the roadmap for prioritizing the use of COVID-19 vaccines to reflect the impact of Omicron and high population-level immunity due to infection and vaccination,” and no longer recommend the shot for most young teenagers.

“The public health impact of vaccinating healthy children and adolescents is comparatively much lower than the established benefits of traditional essential vaccines for children,” SAGE said in a [press release](#).

The [new guidance](#) describes three priority groups – high, medium, and low – based on the “risk of severe disease and death” when contracting the virus. The agency said that for the low-priority group, “traditional essential vaccines” have

a greater impact on common childhood diseases.

The agency also released updated guidance on COVID boosters.

“Updated to reflect that much of the population is either vaccinated or previously infected with COVID-19, or both, the revised roadmap reemphasizes the importance of vaccinating those still at risk of severe disease, mostly older adults and those with underlying conditions, including with additional boosters,” said SAGE Chair Dr. Hanna Nohynek.

For healthy adults under 60 – a medium priority group – SAGE recommends the entire vaccine series and one booster dose but does not recommend additional boosters. Although SAGE claims additional boosters are safe for this group, SAGE does not routinely recommend them, given the comparatively low public health returns.

In the press release, SAGE said countries should consider factors including “disease burden, cost-effectiveness, and other health or programmatic priorities and opportunity costs” when deciding whether healthy children and teens should be vaccinated.

According to [Yahoo News](#), the Center for Disease Control and Prevention disagrees with the WHO’s position, which isn’t surprising considering the agency’s fervor to inoculate the nation’s youngest children with endless doses of COVID vaccines.