



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Jessica Michan jmichan@legacycommunityhealth.org](mailto:jmichan@legacycommunityhealth.org) (713) 364-3221

[Barrett White cwhite@legacycommunityhealth.org](mailto:cwhite@legacycommunityhealth.org) or (713) 416-7309

### **Child Immunization Appointments Still Down 50% Post-COVID**

#### *Pediatric Annual Visits for Children Over 3 Fall Drastically Below Normal in May*

HOUSTON (June 14, 2020) – As [Legacy Community Health](https://www.legacycommunityhealth.org) continues to track the rate of pediatric annual exams to ensure children are receiving their immunizations, a look at May's visits showed a 50% decrease from the same month in 2019 for children over three years old. Largely attributed to parents' anxiety over exposure to COVID-19, Legacy staff are actively reaching out to parents whose child is due or past due for an annual checkup to ensure they are not falling behind on their vaccinations.

"We are now actively reaching out to parents to protect not only their children, but also the community against preventable diseases, while continuing safety protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19," says Dr. Tamisha Jones, pediatric medical director at Legacy Community Health. "For children with special health conditions, or those who are behind on immunizations, waiting to vaccinate is not a good idea."

Although alarming, the numbers are a vast improvement from April when annual checkups for children over 3 years old were projected to drop nearly 94% from pre-COVID rates. The projection for children two and under was estimated at 88%.

Wellness visits for children age two and under are now back to normal levels.

Vaccines have drastically reduced infant deaths and disability caused by vaccine-preventable diseases. Postponing early vaccines for babies and young children could create a vaccine gap and possibly expose a child to diseases like measles, pertussis or pneumococcus.

Throughout the novel coronavirus pandemic, Legacy clinics have proactively changed procedures and patient visits to help ensure maximum protection at our facilities, such as [a drive-thru for sick pediatric patients in need of lab testing](#).

If you have questions or concerns about vaccinating your child during COVID-19 outbreak contact your child's Legacy pediatrician or provider to discuss your particular situation. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 832-548-5000.

To set up an appointment for sick pediatric visits through Legacy's Virtual Pediatric Clinic, new or established patients can call **(832) 548-5000** and follow instructions to see a provider. Health providers who speak Spanish or other languages are available.

Legacy also continues to offer adult and pediatric primary care and sick visits, HIV/AIDS care, OB/GYN services, free HIV and pregnancy testing, and virtual behavioral health services for adults and children. Locations and their hours of operation are always listed at [www.legacycommunityhealth.org](http://www.legacycommunityhealth.org). Patients can also call **832-548-5000** with questions or to make an appointment.

Legacy accepts most HMOs/PPOs, Medicaid, Medicare and CHIP plans. Legacy also utilizes a sliding scale fee to lower the cost of services for uninsured patients.

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### **About Legacy Community Health**

Legacy Community Health (Legacy) is a full-service network of community medical clinics offering primary and specialty care to in the Texas Gulf Coast region. Services include adult primary care, pediatrics, dental care, vision services, behavioral health services, OB/GYN and maternity, vaccinations and immunizations, health promotion and community outreach, wellness and nutrition, and comprehensive HIV/AIDS care. With 35 locations across Houston, Baytown, Deer Park, and Beaumont, Legacy is the largest Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Texas. Legacy has been a United Way-affiliated agency since 1990. To learn more, visit [www.legacycommunityhealth.org](http://www.legacycommunityhealth.org).