



To the kids of Aotearoa

The pandemic has already been 1.5 years, which for kids, is a pretty long part of your life.

You've worked hard at keeping your families and communities safe.

And now, Covid-19 is in New Zealand, and you're still waiting for the vaccines. You might feel worried about that, or bored, or tired, or not that bothered at all. There are many ways to feel.

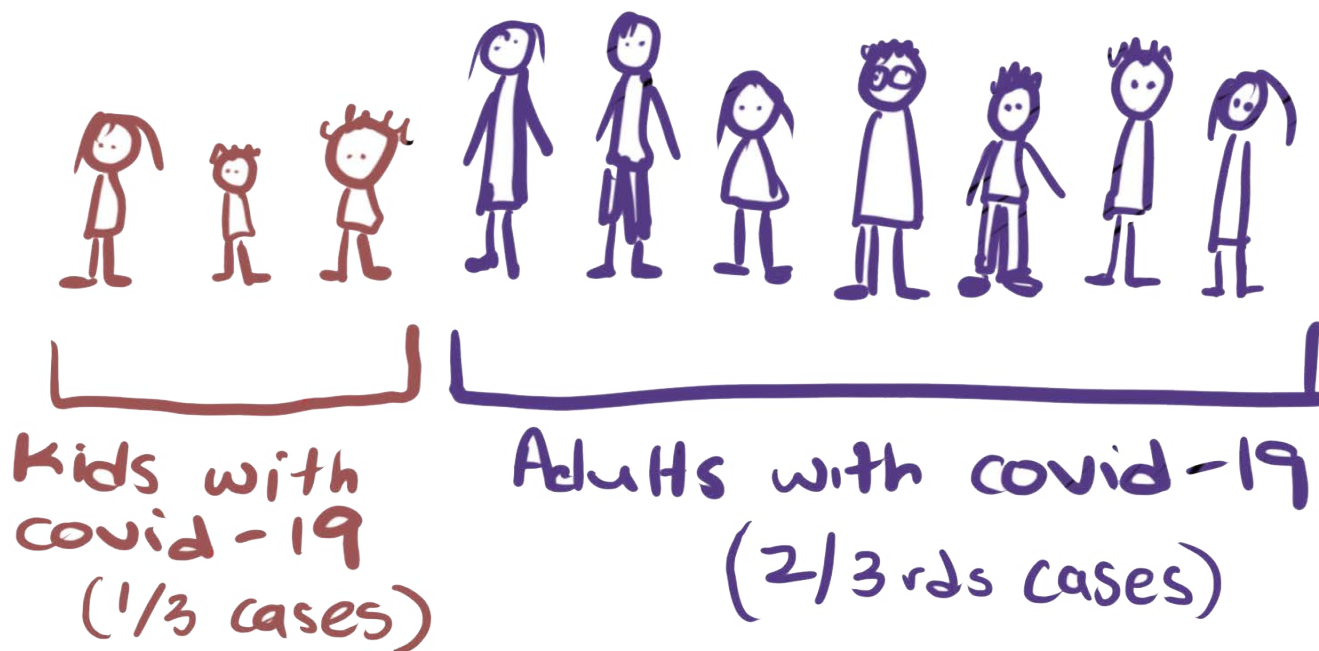
Sometimes, adults think that if we don't tell you things we're protecting you. And it's true that sometimes it's easier not to know about hard things! Especially when, as kids, you often have less power to do anything about the hard things.

But sometimes kids prefer to know about the hard things, so they can do their best to deal with them. If that's you, then read on.



What is happening in the Covid-19 outbreak in Aotearoa?

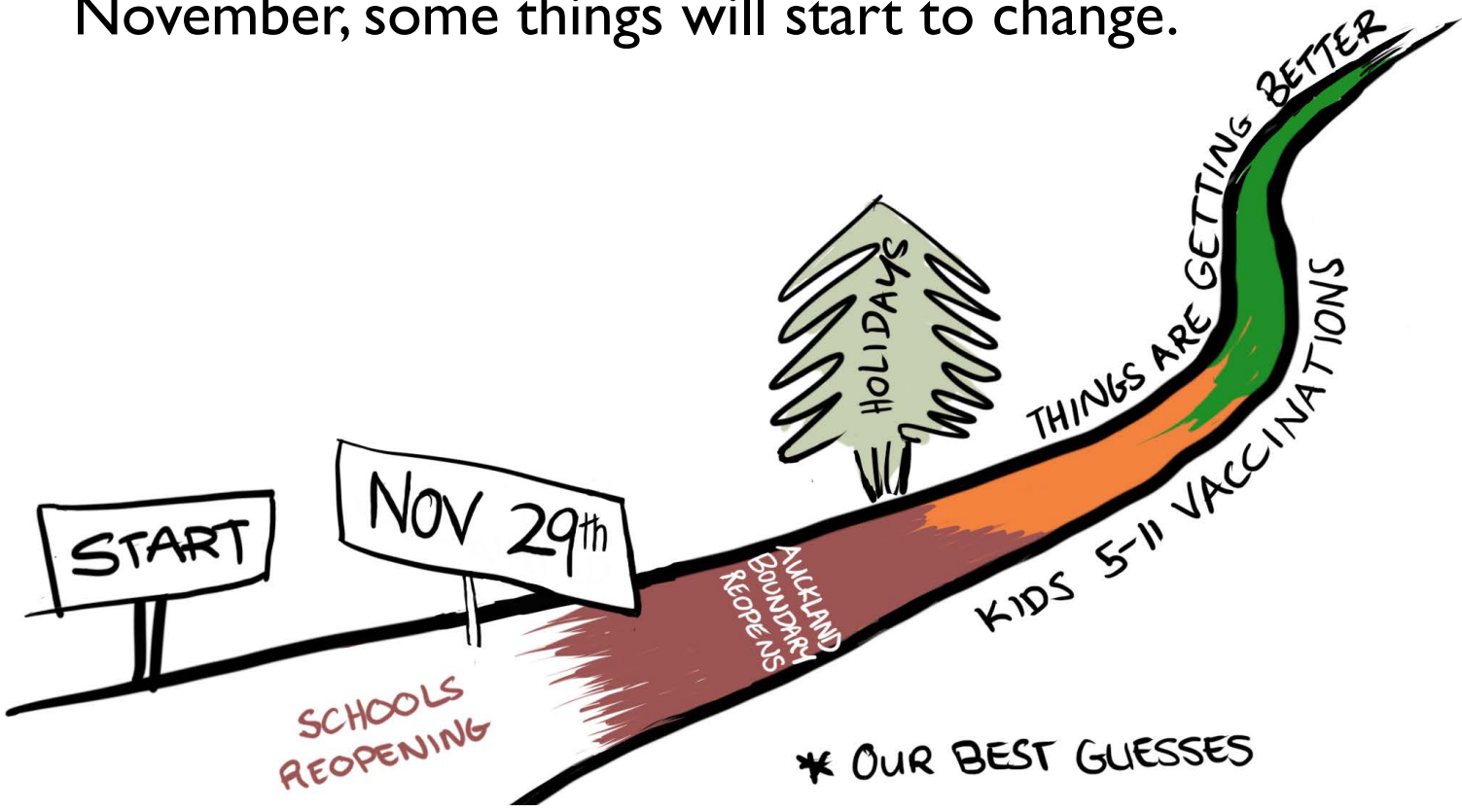
In this current delta outbreak in Aotearoa, about one third of the people infected have been children and young people under age 20. So we're hoping to get more young people vaccinated as soon as possible.



When will this
end?

The truth is that we are going to be dealing with Covid-19 for a long time, but some things will get easier soon.

At the moment, we're waiting for more people to be vaccinated so that we can start moving about more freely. From the end of November, some things will start to change.



Around the world, we have seen that when kids do get Covid-19, they usually don't get very sick. It's common for kids to not even know that they are sick because they don't feel any different. For most kids, getting Covid-19 is usually a bit like getting a cold.

What happens when kids
get Covid-19?



What are the risks for kids who get Covid-19?

We know from Australia that about one or two out of every hundred kids who get Covid-19 need to visit the hospital, but this is usually a quick stay.

Perhaps 1 in 25 children who get Covid-19 can have symptoms that last longer than one month.

It is very, very rare for children to die from Covid-19.



So, it seems like the things that are worst about Covid-19 for most kids aren't how the virus itself might make you feel, but how it affects your life and family.

Some children have said that lockdowns can be hard because families stuck at home can feel stressed and the house can be noisy.



Will kids be getting a vaccine?

Kids in the United States aged 5–11 have just started being vaccinated. Tests show that it is safe and works really well at protecting kids from getting sick.

The government has already ordered enough vaccines for all the kids aged 5-11 in Aotearoa.





We've heard that many kids want to know about what the vaccine would be like. Vaccines for kids have littler needles and smaller doses than adult vaccines because kids' bodies are smaller. For the kid-size Pfizer vaccine, the bottles have a special **orange** cap so nurses can tell them apart.

The injection should feel about the same as other vaccines you have gotten before, so it might hurt a tiny bit but then it's over.

What happens when people don't want to get vaccinated?



Sometimes people are afraid of getting the vaccine or feel worried. Recently, over 6000 doctors in New Zealand signed a letter saying it's best to get the vaccine to prevent Covid-19, because the virus can be so dangerous.

But if someone in your house is still too worried to get the vaccine, the best thing to do is be kind to them. With kindness people sometimes feel less scared.

What if I have more questions?

You can find our full article written for kids at TheSpinoff.com. We wrote it in consultation with Lola Huata (age 7), Jessica Brockett (age 7), Alex Williams (age 6), Theo, Violet and Henry Viskovich (ages 6, 8 & 10) and Caden and Lachlan MacDonald (ages 10 & 11).

If you have any more worries or questions you would like us to know about, you can [email us](#). **Julie** is a researcher who talks to children about health and **Jin** is a doctor who cares for children.



Dr. Julie Spray and Dr. Jin Russell