

## As hesitancy over COVID vaccine mandates reaches fever pitch, fears grow teenagers will forego another life-saving shot: The HPV vaccine

While states and districts decide whether children should have to receive the COVID-19 vaccine before returning to the classroom, it is a good time to remember another lifesaving vaccine that is grossly underutilized and should also be mandated by Pennsylvania schools: the HPV vaccine.

HPV, or human papillomavirus, causes a variety of ailments ranging from benign to deadly. Some strains cause genital warts, while others cause cancers of the cervix and other organs. It is spread through any kind of genital contact and is so common that the [vast majority](#) of Americans will be infected with some strain during their lifetime.

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The need for mandated HPV vaccination is not about sex at all — it's about cancer.

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By allowing half of our nation's children to go unvaccinated against HPV, we are dooming tens of thousands of them to grow up into cancer patients. They will undergo painful treatments and psychological trauma, and many will die. We have a safe and effective way to save them from this fate. We owe it to them to make sure they receive it.

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