



**PHILIPPINE PEDIATRIC SOCIETY - PEDIATRIC INFECTIOUS DISEASE
SOCIETY OF THE PHILIPPINES**

**Statement of Support for the Department of Health's
Vaccination Catch-Up Efforts and Bakuna Eskwela Program
8 November 2024**



The Philippine Pediatric Society (PPS) and the Pediatric Infectious Disease Society of the Philippines (PIDSP) wholeheartedly support the Department of Health's intensified initiatives—the Big Catch-Up Program and Bakuna Eskwela—to protect Filipino children against vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs). These targeted efforts are crucial for strengthening immunization coverage and ensuring that children receive the protection they need to thrive.

The Big Catch-Up Program represents a much-needed response to address gaps in routine and catch-up immunizations. Despite the challenges in recent years, vaccines remain one of the safest, most thoroughly tested, and most effective tools in medicine. As pediatricians and child health advocates, we know that vaccines save lives, protect communities, and ensure healthier futures. The PPS and PIDSP urge parents, caregivers, and healthcare professionals to support this initiative by encouraging the vaccination of all eligible children. Together, we can help ensure that the high vaccination rates necessary to safeguard public health are met.

In tandem, the Bakuna Eskwela program provides free, accessible vaccines for school-aged children, including protection against Measles, Rubella, Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Human Papillomavirus (HPV) through a partnership with the Department of Education. School-based immunization not only offers an opportunity to protect children but also fosters an environment where students, teachers, parents, and health workers collaborate in a unified effort to eliminate VPDs from our schools and communities.

Our commitment to these programs extends beyond this statement of support. As a society, we will continue to work alongside the Department of Health to rebuild public confidence in vaccines, sharing accurate, evidence-based information to counter misinformation and reinforce trust in our regulatory bodies. Vaccines have undergone rigorous evaluation by both local and international experts to ensure safety and efficacy. Decades of evidence show that the more children are protected, the fewer illnesses and tragedies our communities will face due to VPDs.

We, the PPS and PIDSP, stand with the Department of Health in its vision for a healthier Philippines. By promoting the benefits of vaccines, reaching underserved communities, and making vaccinations accessible to all, we move closer to a future where every Filipino child can live free from the threat of VPDs. Let us support this vital initiative, stand together in prioritizing child health, and make vaccination a shared responsibility for a stronger, healthier nation.

Together, we protect. Together, we prevent. Together, we can ensure a brighter, safer future for all.