

Morocco starts vaccinating children ages 12 to 17

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A mother accompanies her son to receive his COVID-19 vaccine as Morocco launches a campaign to vaccinate 12-17 year olds before the start of the school year, in Rabat, Morocco, Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2021. Credit: AP Photo/Mosa'ab Elshamy

Morocco has launched a campaign to administer COVID-19 vaccines to

children from 12 to 17, becoming one of the first African countries to inoculate that age group.

The World Health Organization says that the North African country has already given around 33 million doses to adults this year. Now, Morocco is focusing its efforts to vaccinate [younger people](#).

"I chose to vaccinate my daughter, because we want our children to be able to go to school," said Fattouma Chouilakh, whose 12-year-old daughter studies at a [middle school](#) in Rabat.

Parental authorization is required and vaccination isn't mandatory. But those who don't want to vaccinate their children will have to follow a distance education program and their kids won't legally be allowed to attend school in person.

Access to good education—not just concerns over health—is one of the major factors influencing Moroccan parents' decisions for their children.

"We suffered a lot of problems with distance education. There were no positive results—that's why we chose to do the vaccine," Chouilakh said.

Nationwide there are some 420 vaccination centers that have been made available from Tuesday until Oct. 3.

The campaign, which will use Pfizer and Sinopharm vaccines, is expected to reach about 3 million Moroccan students, [health authorities](#) said.



A teenager receives his COVID-19 vaccine as Morocco launches a campaign to vaccinate 12-17 year olds before the start of the school year, in Rabat, Morocco, Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2021. Credit: AP Photo/Mosa'ab Elshamy



A girl holds her mother's hand while receiving her COVID-19 vaccine as Morocco launches a campaign to vaccinate 12-17 year olds before the start of the school year, in Rabat, Morocco, Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2021. Credit: AP Photo/Mosa'ab Elshamy



School students and their parents wait to receive their COVID-19 vaccines as Morocco launches a campaign to vaccinate 12-17 year olds before the start of the school year, in Rabat, Morocco, Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2021. Credit: AP Photo/Mosa'ab Elshamy



A mother accompanies her son to receive his COVID-19 vaccine as Morocco launches a campaign to vaccinate 12-17 year olds before the start of the school year, in Rabat, Morocco, Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2021. Credit: AP Photo/Mosa'ab Elshamy

Morocco has registered more than 856,000 infections and 12,540 deaths from COVID-19, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Morocco has administered more vaccine doses per person than the [global average](#), and the highest proportion in Africa, according to Our World in Data.

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