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## Close to 80% teens in 15-17 yrs group vaxxed, say pvt schools

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New Delhi: Eager to resume offline classes, private schools have been trying to reach the 100% vaccination status for their students at the earliest. An umbrella body of private schools in the city has adopted various methods — from deciding to award the school that will first reach the 100% target to working with the directorate of education (DoE) to set up inoculation centres in schools.

Action Committee Unaided Recognised Private Schools claims that since the last announcement in January, when just 42% of the private school students in the 15-17 years group were vaccinated, the average figure now stands at almost 78%. Private schools have about 3.5 lakh eligible students.

Instituting the award "is like encouraging the schools to get all their children vaccinated, which will aid in the process of reopening", said Bharat Arora, its general secretary. "Since the release of the vaccination data of 42%, DoE has arranged centres in various schools. Government education officials also got in touch personally with the schools. Now the



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**A SHOT OF HOPE**

average is almost 78%," he added.

The schools that were lagging also took various initiatives, such as teachers calling parents and holding counselling sessions for students on the importance of getting the jab.

At Darshan Academy in northeast Delhi's Kirpal Bagh, 232 of the 316 eligible students weren't vaccinated till recently. Now around 78% of them have received the first dose. "The teachers were separately talking to the students and the parents, convincing them about the vaccine's importance with the board examinations approaching. So

me parents were earlier reluctant as there was no news of the re-opening of schools," said principal Mamta Sabharwal.

At The Indian School, 391 of the 520 eligible students have been vaccinated. "Some of the students had Covid, so they are yet to get the dose. We had a camp in our school, the class teachers also personally spoke to the parents. The parents-teachers association also played an important role," said principal Tania Joshi.

"Now hopefully the government will reopen schools physically without the option of hybrid mode," she added.

Spring Meadows School in Dwarka More, which has already achieved around 90% of the vaccination target, said it had been creating awareness about the Covid vaccines for a long time. Anshul Dewan, its director, said, "We kept camp at the school twice. Now out of the 1,416 eligible students, 1,261 are vaccinated." MM Public School, Pitampura has also vaccinated close to 90% of the target group.

Delhi government schools, as on January 22, have vaccinated 84% of their eligible students in the 15-17 years group.