

Observing World Polio Day



Poliomyelitis, or more commonly the polio virus, is a highly infectious disease that most commonly affects children under the age of 5. The virus is spread person to person, most typically through contaminated water. Polio attacks the nervous system, and in some cases can lead to paralysis.

Rotary International has been leading the global effort to eradicate the polio virus since 1985 when it launched the PolioPlus campaign. Over the course of four decades, Rotary has administered more than 3 billion vaccines in 122 countries, reducing the polio rate by an astounding 99.9%.

Today polio remains endemic in just two countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan, where vaccination efforts are hindered by political instability and prolonged conflict zones, inaccessible populations and population movements, poor sanitation, weakened health systems and vaccine resistance.

The [End Polio Now](#) campaign works in partnerships with UNICEF, the World Health Organization, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and others to leverage resources, facilitate vaccine procurement, streamline distribution, and mobilize communities. And Rotary's advocacy efforts are directly linked to more than \$10Billion in direct investments from governments to this effort.

Staying vigilant with polio vaccinations globally remains a top priority. In the absence of Rotary's vaccination efforts, we would expect to see polio transmission as high as 200,000 cases/year within a decade. While our goal is closer than ever, until we end polio for good, every child remains at risk.

\$3

The average cost to fully protect a child against polio.

To further support the #EndPolioNow initiative, Portsmouth Rotary Club will be hosting a [Purple Pinkie fundraiser](#), with 100% of funds raised going directly to Rotary's polio eradication efforts. What's the meaning behind the purple pinkie? it's a symbol of immunization. When children receive the polio vaccine, Rotarians mark their pinkie fingers with a purple dye to ensure they don't receive a double dose. In solidarity with this important effort, we'll be dyeing our pinkies purple to raise awareness and show our commitment to eradicating polio once and for all.