

Evidence-based Strategies and Resources to Increase Routine Vaccination Rates and Confidence

A TOOLKIT FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

October 2023



Background

Late summer and early fall are usually the time when many families begin preparing to send their children back to school. This is a crucial time for healthcare providers to communicate with families to add routine childhood vaccinations, including the flu, COVID-19, and HPV vaccines, to their back-to-school checklist. Vaccination is critical for the health and well-being of children, families, schools, and communities. Routine vaccines and school vaccination requirements protect children's health against vaccine-preventable diseases, keeping them in school and ready to learn. Drops in vaccine coverage place children at increased risk of illnessⁱ, including serious illness and absenteeism^{ii iii iv}, contributing to them falling behind on social, emotional, and academic milestones.



Kindergarten vaccination rates have remained high and stable for decades in the United States. During the two school years following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, routine [kindergarten vaccination coverage](#) dropped by two percentage points nationwide from 95% to 93% and by as much as 10% in some jurisdictions. This is the lowest that kindergarten routine vaccination coverage has been in the last decade. At least ¼ million children who entered kindergarten during the pandemic are potentially susceptible to vaccine-preventable disease. [Influenza vaccination coverage](#) also dropped five percent among children 6 months to 17 years old during the same time period.

Call to Action

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) calls on [healthcare providers and education professionals](#) to support school-aged children to catch up on their vaccinations. Healthcare providers are trusted leaders within their communities and have unique opportunities to communicate with and support families in ensuring children are up to date on routine childhood vaccinations and in compliance with school vaccination requirements. CDC encourages healthcare providers to [foster a culture of immunization](#) in their clinical practice, use every opportunity to review vaccine history, and recommend and administer all Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended childhood vaccines, including the flu, COVID-19, and HPV vaccines, that are due or might have been missed because of pandemic-related disruptions. Additionally, efforts must be made to ensure all children have equitable access to routine vaccines, and that vaccination coverage is sufficiently high to protect children, their families, and their communities against vaccine-preventable diseases.

How to Use this Toolkit:

To support partners in this effort, CDC developed a playbook, [Let's RISE \(Routine Immunizations on Schedule for Everyone\)](#), that contains evidence-based strategies and CDC tools and resources to get routine immunization coverage back to or ideally above pre-pandemic levels. This toolkit, developed by the [Public Health Foundation \(PHF\)](#) in collaboration with CDC, is a companion resource that brings together additional actionable tools that can be

used by healthcare providers to accomplish this goal. Resources in this toolkit are compiled from healthcare professional associations, state health departments, public health partners, and government organizations (Appendix 1). Jurisdiction-specific resources are included as examples of tools and communication assets that are currently being used to get children caught up on routine vaccines.

The toolkit is organized around four evidence-based strategies for strengthening vaccination coverage: 1) reminding families about vaccines that are due or required for school entry, 2) helping share the facts, 3) making strong recommendations, and 4) helping to make vaccines more accessible. Healthcare providers can use these strategies and resources to foster a culture of immunization in their practice and help children get caught up on vaccinations missed or delayed during the pandemic. Resources in this toolkit can be downloaded, adapted, and shared with your patients and their families and includes parent handouts, patient screening checklists, communication assets such as letter templates, social media content, conversation guides, and off-site or school-located vaccination clinic guides.

About PHF

The Public Health Foundation (PHF) is a national, non-profit organization whose mission is to advance the public health workforce to achieve organizational excellence. For more information, visit phf.org.

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Additional Immunization-Related Toolkits for Healthcare Providers

- [Immunization Campaign Toolkit – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
This toolkit provides educational communication tools such as articles, videos, and graphics that underscore the importance of immunizations
- [Adolescent Immunization Resource Guide – Association of Immunization Managers](#)
This resource guide provides an assortment of immunization programs activities and strategies to enhance and improve adolescent vaccination.
- [COVID-19 Vaccination Field Guide: 12 Strategies for Your Community – CDC](#)
This field guide provides intervention strategies to promote COVID-19 vaccine confidence and uptake. Intended to support the work of health departments, community organizations, and faith-based organizations, the guide highlights common barriers communities experience in vaccine confidence and uptake.
- [Cancer Prevention Through HPV Vaccination: An Action Guide for Small Private Practices – National HPV Vaccination Roundtable](#)
This action guide provides evidence-based interventions and other strategies to encourage providers, support teams, and health systems to increase HPV vaccination rates in their clinics and health systems.

Strategy 1

Remind families about childhood vaccines that are due or required for school entry

Back-to-school well-child visits, summer camp vaccine clinics, and sports physicals are a unique opportunity to encourage vaccination awareness, share school vaccine requirements, and provide facts about vaccines with patients and their families. Healthcare providers can avoid missed opportunities to vaccinate children by establishing a reminder and recall system for busy families, assessing a patient's vaccination status at every visit, and asking parents to complete a screening form or checklist for vaccine contraindications and precautions while in the waiting room. Consider downloading, adapting, and sharing the below resources in-person, on your practice website, through your social media channels, or develop your own materials from these examples.



Send reminders to families whose children are behind on immunizations

Reminder/recall systems are effective tools used to identify and remind families that vaccinations are due soon (reminder) or late (recall). These can be implemented by various methods (e.g., telephone, letter, postcard, text message) and often include educational messaging about the importance of vaccination. The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) offers many resources to help you build these systems into your practice:

- [Customizable Reminder and Recall Resources – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

- [Practice Improvement Tool: Sample Recall Project Charter – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Practice Improvement Tool: Sample Recall PDSA Cycle 1 – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Practice Improvement Tool: Sample Recall PDSA Cycle 2 – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

Additional Sample Letters/Messages

Healthcare providers can download, adapt, and brand these customizable letters/messages with their practice's information to let parents and patients know when vaccines are due or when patients miss a dose.

- [Adolescent Vaccine Reminder Letter – CDC](#)
- [Flu Vaccine Appointment Reminder Template \(doc\) – CDC](#)
- [Flu Vaccine Appointment Reminder Template \(pdf\) – CDC](#)
- [Adult Vaccine Catch-up Email Template – American College of Physicians](#)

Additional Resources

- [CDC Vaccine Schedules App for Healthcare Providers](#)
- [The Pink Book - 14th Edition \(2021\) Chapter 3: Immunization Strategies for Healthcare Practices and Providers – CDC](#)

Communicating accurate information, understanding your audience, and confronting misinformation are essential roles that healthcare providers can play to help catch children up on their vaccinations. How healthcare providers talk to patients and their families about vaccines is a crucial component of improving vaccine coverage, increasing vaccine confidence, and building trust. Use these resources to learn techniques for holding empathetic conversations about vaccines with your patients

Resources for Building Vaccine Confidence

These resources offer tips and techniques to support more productive conversations and communications about getting children vaccinated. While some resources listed are vaccine-specific, the strategies can be used for all vaccines.

Effective Vaccine Conversation Tools

- [Reframing The Conversation About Child and Adolescent Vaccinations Sharekit – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Talking to Patients about COVID-19 Vaccination: An Intro to Motivational Interviewing for Healthcare Providers – CDC](#)
- [References for Provider Resources for Vaccine Conversations – CDC](#)
- [Talking to Parents about Vaccines – CDC](#)
- [Vaccination Through Trusted Messages – National Alliance for Hispanic Health](#)
- [Building Parental/Guardian Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccination – Washington State Department of Health](#)
- [Language that Works to Improve Vaccine Acceptance: Communications Cheat Sheet – deBeaumont Foundation](#)
- [Protect Your Patients this Flu Season: Pharmacist Guide and Talking Points – CDC](#)
- [Boosting Public Discourse: Reframing Childhood Immunization – FrameWorks Institute](#)

Talking With Vaccine Hesitant Parents/Patients

- [Need Help Responding to Vaccine-Hesitant Parents? – Immunize.org](#)
- [Talking with Vaccine Hesitant Parents – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Vaccine Hesitancy Toolkit – Voices for Vaccines](#)
- [Healthcare Providers: Understanding Needle Fears and Phobia – CDC](#)

Building Vaccine Confidence

- [Vaccinate with Confidence – CDC](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence – CDC](#)
- [Vaccinate with Confidence Fact Sheet – American Lung Association](#)
- [Vaccine Confident Toolkit – American College of Preventive Medicine](#)

Be Prepared to Frequently Asked Questions and Address Concerns

These resources offer information and communication strategies that healthcare professionals can use to craft responses to parents/guardians frequently asked questions about vaccines.

- [Preparing for Questions Parents May Ask about Vaccines – CDC](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions – Voices for Vaccines](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions: Adolescent Vaccines – UNITY Consortium](#)
- [Answers to Your Most Common Questions about Childhood Vaccines – CDC](#)
- [Childhood Immunization Frequently Asked Questions – Washington State Department of Health](#)

Address Vaccine Misinformation and Disinformation

These resources offer credible websites, organizations, and communication strategies that healthcare providers can go to for guidance on crafting responses to misinformation and disinformation.

- [The Debunking Handbook 2020 – George Mason University](#)
- [Vaccine Misinformation Management Field Guide – UNICEF](#)
- [Vaccines and Immunization: Myths and Misconceptions – World Health Organization](#)
- [Vaccines: The Myths and the Facts – American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology](#)
- [How to Address COVID-19 Vaccine Misinformation – CDC](#)

Improve Vaccine-related Communications

Available in various formats including flyers, factsheets, posters, videos, and web buttons, vaccine communication materials can be readily available in the waiting room, new patient packets, and on your clinic website to save time by helping parents get answers to their questions before meeting with you. Use these resources to help complement conversations about vaccines with your patients.

Patient Education Materials (printable)

Healthcare providers can share facts and answer frequently asked questions about childhood vaccines by printing and sharing copies of handouts with families directly.

General Immunization Education Materials

- [Childhood Immunization Discussion Guides – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Adolescent Immunization Discussion Guides – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Immunizations Campaign Toolkit – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Vaccine Factsheets – Voices for Vaccines](#)
- [Vaccine Information Statements - CDC](#)

Parent Handouts

- [9 Things You Can Do for You and Your Child – CDC](#)
- [Reliable Sources of Immunization Information: Where Parents Can Go to Find Answers! – Immunize.org](#)
- [Top Ten Reasons to Protect Your Child by Vaccinating – Immunize.org](#)
- [Don't take chances with your family's health — make sure you all get vaccinated against influenza every year! – Immunize.org](#)
- [10 Ways to Separate Vaccine Fact From Fiction – U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#)

Flu Vaccine-Specific Education Materials

- [Flu Toolkit – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Flu Infographics – CDC](#)
- [Flu Vaccine: Get the Facts – CDC](#)

HPV Vaccine-Specific Education Materials

- [HPV Vaccine Facts – American Cancer Society](#)
- [What Parents Should Know About the HPV Vaccines – American Cancer Society](#)
- [Start at 9 Toolkit – National HPV Vaccination Roundtable](#)
- [HPV Educational Bookmarks – National HPV Vaccination Roundtable](#)
- [HPV Vaccine Conversation Guide - CDC](#)

Digital and Social Media Assets

Healthcare providers can browse, upload, and post these shareable images sample social media messages, and infographics for parents and guardians on your practice website and/or social media channels.

Immunization Campaigns

- [2023-2024 Back to School Let's Catch Up – CDC](#)
- [2023-2024 Flu Season Digital Media Toolkit – CDC](#)
- [#DontWaitVaccinate School Aged Children – California Immunization Coalition](#)
- [The Power to Protect Campaign: Digital and Social Media Toolkit 2023 – Learning First Alliance](#)
- [#DontWaitVaccinate Adolescents – UNITY Consortium](#)

Posters/Infographics

- [2023-2024 Back to School Let's Catch Up – CDC](#)
- [Flu Season Is Here Poster – UNITY Consortium](#)
- [Catch Up on Checkups and Routine Vaccines Infographic – CDC](#)
- [Laminated Immunization Schedules – Immunize.org](#)

Translated Materials by Language

- [Child and Teen Vaccine-Preventable Diseases eBook \(Spanish\)](#)

- [Reminder postcards for practices \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Overdue postcards for practices \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Vaccinations for Children and Infants, ages 0-10 \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Vaccines for Babies \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Flyer: Poster Urging Parents to Ensure Adolescents are Up to Date on Routine Vaccinations for Adolescents \(English, Spanish\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Communication Card \(English, Spanish\)](#)
- [Reminder postcards for practices \(Chinese\)](#)
- [Overdue postcards for practices \(Chinese\)](#)
- [Vaccinations for Children and Infants, ages 0-10 \(Chinese\)](#)
- [Vaccinations for Children and Infants, ages 0-10 \(French\)](#)
- [Translated Materials Library – National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants, and Migrants \(Choose Topic “Prevention: Vaccine, General”\)](#)

Choose Topic “Prevention: Vaccine, General”

Health Education > Translated Materials Library

Translated Materials Library



The Translated Materials Library offers fact sheets, posters, videos, audio recordings and other resources in English and more than 100 languages free of charge. These materials come from organizations across the country working to communicate effectively with RIM communities. NRC-RIM has worked hard to compile and organize these materials, though we cannot guarantee their quality.

Acknowledgement: This resource leverages and builds upon the work of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance to collect these resources early in the pandemic.

Language + Q ... Resource Type +

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Language	Topic	Resource Type	Source (Organization)	Source (Geographic)	Link	English (Reference)	Date Added
Bengali	COVID: COVID 101	Poster	Bangladesh Medical Association of North America	2-National Org	Link to Material		12/11/2020
Arabic	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020
Chinese, Simplified	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020
English	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020
Farsi	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020
French	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020
Haitian Creole	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020
Hindi	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020
Portuguese	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020
Spanish	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020
Swahili	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020
Tamil	COVID: Website	Website	California - Hesperian	1-State or Local	Link to Material	Link to Material	12/11/2020

Search dropdown menu items:

- Other: Ramadan (14)
- Other: Tobacco (7)
- Prevention: Cover Cough (15)
- Prevention: Facemask (306)
- Prevention: Social Dist... (179)
- Prevention: Stay Home (170)
- Prevention: Stop Spre... (653)
- Prevention: Wash Han... (170)
- Quarantine: Exposed to ... (1)
- Quarantine: Exposed to ... (1)
- Quarantine: Exposed to ... (1)
- Quarantine: Exposed to... (77)
- Quarantine: Feeling Si... (190)

Strategy 3

Assess Vaccination Status and Make Strong Recommendations

Research has shown an effective recommendation from a healthcare provider is a critical factor in whether parents decide to vaccinate. Furthermore, healthcare providers are encouraged to use every visit as an opportunity to recommend and administer all vaccines. Routine vaccinations during well-child checks or sports physicals are key to helping keep children safe in school, childcare, and participating in other activities.



Implement Systems to Review Vaccine History at Every Visit

Check your patient's immunization history using the [state's immunization information system](#) and your practice's electronic medical records (EMR) system to determine which vaccines are due.

- [Immunization Schedules – CDC](#)
- [Catch-Up Immunization Schedule for Children, Birth-18 Years – CDC](#)
- [Screening Checklist for Contraindications to Vaccines for Children and Teens – Immunize.org](#)

Have Standing Orders

- [Steps for Implementing Standing Orders for Immunization in Your Practice Setting – Immunize.org](#)
- [Using Standing Orders for Administering Vaccines: What You Should Know – Immunize.org](#)

Make Strong Recommendations

- [Key Strategies for Making Vaccine Recommendations – CDC](#)
- [Childhood #HowIRecommend Vaccination Video Series – CDC](#)
- [Adolescent #HowIRecommend Vaccination Video Series – CDC](#)
- [FightFlu: Make a Strong Flu Vaccine Recommendation – CDC](#)
- [PowerPoint Slide Deck: Prepare Your Practice to Fight Flu – CDC](#)

Additional Resources

- [Preparing Your Patient for Their Immunization Appointment – American College of Physician](#)

Patients may experience an array of barriers to getting their recommended vaccinations. There are many ways healthcare providers can help improve accessibility such as offering vaccination-only appointments, holding vaccination clinics, offering vaccination on a night or weekend, partnering with schools or other organizations to offer school-located or other off-site vaccination clinics, and providing referrals to eligible families on where they can access free vaccines in their community.

Off-Site or School-Located Vaccination Clinics

- [Satellite, Temporary, and Off-Site Vaccination Clinic Supply Checklist – CDC](#)
- [Considerations for Planning Curbside/Drive-Through Vaccination Clinics – CDC](#)
- [Checklist of Best Practices for COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics Held at Satellite, Temporary, or Off-Site Locations – CDC](#)
- [Advancing Health Center & School Partnerships – School-Based Health Alliance](#)
- [Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit – CDC](#)

Free Vaccines for Children

- [Vaccines for Children \(VFC\): State Web Sites – CDC](#)
- [Vaccine for Children Program \(VFC\) Fact Sheet for Parents – CDC](#)



Immunization Training and Continuing Education

Explore training opportunities to help expand your knowledge and skills on a variety of vaccination topics. All trainings listed are based on the vaccine recommendations made by ACIP. Physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and other healthcare providers are invited to apply for continuing education credits/contact hours, when available.

With Continuing Education

- [You Call the Shots: Vaccines Web-based Training Course – CDC](#)
- [How Nurses, Medical Assistants Can Foster Immunization Culture – CDC](#)
- [You Are the Key to HPV Cancer Prevention – CDC](#)
- [COVID-19: Improving Pediatric Vaccination Rates CME – American Academy of Family Physicians](#)

Without Continuing Education

- [Building Awareness of Immunization & Vaccines - CDC TRAIN](#)
- [Vaccines Pink Book Webinar Series - CDC](#)
- [Immunization and Effective Communication Learning Bundle - CDC TRAIN](#)
- [You Call the Shots: Immunization Training Series - CDC TRAIN](#)

Healthcare Professional Organizations and Partners

- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology
- American College of Preventive Medicine
- American College of Physicians
- American Medical Association

State and local health departments

- Washington State Department of Health

Public health professional organizations and partners

- American Lung Association
- American Cancer Society
- Association of Immunization Managers
- California Immunization Coalition
- DeBeaumont Foundation
- FrameWorks Institute
- Immunization Action Coalition
- Learning First Alliance
- National Alliance for Hispanic Health
- National HPV Vaccination Roundtable
- National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants, and Migrants
- School-Based Health Alliance
- UNITY Consortium
- Voices for Vaccines

National and international governmental organizations

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- United States Department of Health and Human Services
- UNICEF
- World Health Organization

Universities

- George Mason University

ⁱ Sinclair, D. et al. 2019. Forecasted Size of Measles Outbreaks Associated with Vaccination Exemptions for Schoolchildren. *JAMA*. 2(8):e199768. doi:[10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2019.976](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2019.976)

ⁱⁱ Hull, H. and Ambrose, C. 2010. The Impact of School-Located Influenza Vaccination Programs on Student Absenteeism: A Review of the U.S. Literature. *The Journal of School Nursing*. 27(1) <https://doi.org/10.1177/10598405103891>

ⁱⁱⁱ Gicquelais R et al. 2016. Association of School-Based Influenza Vaccination Clinics and School Absenteeism—Arkansas, 2012-2013. *Journal of School Health*. 86(4): 235-241. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.12372>

^{iv} King, J. et al. 2012. Direct and indirect impact of influenza vaccination of young children on school absenteeism. *Vaccine*. Volume 30, Issue 2