

Assessing & Addressing Childhood Vaccine Delay



On-time vaccination is critical to preventing the spread of serious diseases.

To learn more about hesitancy around childhood vaccinations recommended by the CDC, Healthier Generation partnered with FHI 360 to conduct research¹ on parent attitudes, beliefs, and intentions around vaccines, reasons for delay, and trusted sources of information.

Methods

In summer 2022, FHI 360 conducted a national online survey of 3,851 parents and caregivers of children under 18 years old. These data were weighted to be nationally representative. FHI 360 also conducted phone interviews with 31 mothers who had delayed at least one vaccination for their child.

Key Findings

- Similar to national polling data, our survey found that **92%** of parents reported their child had received all their **recommended childhood vaccines**² on time. About 8% had delayed or refused one or more vaccines, while less than 1% had refused *all* vaccines.
- Among the 8% who delayed or refused at least one vaccine, the most common reasons outside of COVID-related healthcare offices closures were:
 - concerns about vaccine ingredients (31%)
 - fear of their child getting too many vaccines at once (29%)
 - wanting to wait until their child was older (27%)
 - concerns about rare serious reactions (26%)

In interviews, mothers also expressed concerns about the safety and necessity of what they referred to as “new” vaccines—that is, vaccines that had been introduced since their own childhood.

- Looking ahead, **85%** of parents plan to have their child receive all recommended vaccines on time. 1% plan to refuse all vaccines. The remaining 14% plan to delay some or all, refuse some, or were not sure of their plans.
 - Parents in the latter (14%) group viewed vaccine-preventable illnesses as being less serious, compared to parents who plan to get their child all vaccinations on time. They were also less confident that the vaccines prevent disease or would be safe for their child.
- Parents consistently identified their child’s doctor as among their most trusted sources of information about childhood vaccines. This finding was true for all demographic groups.
- In interviews, many mothers who delayed said they would have preferred a different type of interaction with their child’s doctor. They felt there was not enough time during appointments to discuss vaccines, and they wanted to “do their own research” prior to vaccination. Many also wanted historic outcome data for vaccines.

Support on-time vaccinations for children.

Visit HealthierGeneration.org/vaccines to download resources for schools and families.

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² Excludes flu and COVID-19 vaccines.