



## Documenting Parental Refusal to Have Their Children Vaccinated

All parents and patients should be informed about the risks and benefits of preventive and therapeutic procedures, including vaccination. In the case of vaccination, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) strongly recommends and federal law mandates that this discussion include the provision of the Vaccine Information Statements (VISs). Despite our best efforts to educate parents about the effectiveness of vaccines and the realistic chances of vaccine-associated adverse events, some will decline to have their children vaccinated. This often results from families misinterpreting or misunderstanding information presented by the media and on unmonitored and biased Web sites, causing substantial and often unrealistic fears.

Within a 12-month period, 74% of pediatricians report encountering a parent who refused or delayed one or more vaccines. A 2011 survey of children six months to six years of age reported that 13% of parents followed an alternative vaccination schedule. Of these, 53% refused certain vaccines and 55% delayed some vaccines until the child was older. Seventeen percent reported refusing all vaccines. In a 2009 survey, 11.5% of parents of children 17 years and younger reported refusing at least one vaccine. The use of this or a similar form in concert with direct and non-condescending discussion can demonstrate the importance you place on appropriate immunizations, focuses parents' attention on the unnecessary risk for which they are accepting responsibility, and may in some instances induce a wavering parent to accept your recommendations.

Providing parents (or guardians) with an opportunity to ask questions about their concerns regarding recommended childhood immunizations, attempting to understand parents' reasons for refusing one or more vaccines, and maintaining a supportive relationship with the family are all part of a good risk management strategy. The AAP encourages documentation of the health care provider's discussion with parents about the serious risks of what could happen to an unimmunized or under-immunized child. Provide parents with the appropriate VIS for each vaccine at each immunization visit and answer their questions. For parents who refuse one or more recommended immunizations, document your conversation and the provision of the VIS(s), have a parent sign the Refusal to Vaccinate form, and keep the form in the patient's medical record. The AAP also recommends that you revisit the immunization discussion at each subsequent appointment and carefully document the discussion, including the benefits to each immunization and the risk of not being age-appropriately immunized. For unimmunized or partially immunized children, some physicians may want to flag the chart to be reminded to revisit the immunization discussion, as well as to alert the provider about missed immunizations when considering the evaluation of future illness, especially young children with fevers of unknown origin.

This form may be used as a template to document that the health care provider had a discussion with the parent signing the form about the risks of failing to immunize the child. It is not intended as a substitute for legal advice from a qualified attorney as differing state laws and factual circumstances will impact the outcome. While it may be modified to reflect the particular circumstances of a patient, family, or medical practice, practices may want to consider obtaining advice from a qualified attorney. If a parent refuses to sign the refusal form such refusal along with the name of a witness to the refusal should be documented in the medical record.

The AAP Section on Infectious Diseases and other contributing sections and committees hope this form will be helpful to you as you deal with parents who refuse immunizations. It is available on the AAP Web site on the Section on Infectious Diseases Web site (<http://www2.aap.org/sections/infectdis/resources.cfm>), and the Web site for the AAP Childhood Immunization Support Program (<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/refusaltovaccinate.html>).

Sincerely,

/s/

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/s/

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# Refusal to Vaccinate

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Child's ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

My child's doctor/nurse, \_\_\_\_\_, has advised me that my child (named above) should receive the following vaccines:

Recommended	Declined
<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis B vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (DTaP or Tdap) vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Diphtheria tetanus (DT or Td) vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib) vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Pneumococcal conjugate or polysaccharide vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Inactivated poliovirus (IPV) vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Influenza (flu) vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Meningococcal conjugate or polysaccharide vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis A vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Rotavirus vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

- That some vaccine-preventable diseases are common in other countries and that my unvaccinated child could easily get one of these diseases while traveling or from a traveler.
- If my child does not receive the vaccine(s) according to the medically accepted schedule, the consequences may include
  - Contracting the illness the vaccine is designed to prevent (the outcomes of these illnesses may include one or more of the following: certain types of cancer, pneumonia, illness requiring hospitalization, death, brain damage, paralysis, meningitis, seizures, and deafness; other severe and permanent effects from these vaccine-preventable diseases are possible as well).
  - Transmitting the disease to others (including those too young to be vaccinated or those with immune problems), possibly requiring my child to stay out of child care or school and requiring someone to miss work to stay home with my child during disease outbreaks.
- My child's doctor and the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention all strongly recommend that the vaccine(s) be given according to recommendations.

Nevertheless, I have decided at this time to decline or defer the vaccine(s) recommended for my child, as indicated above, by checking the appropriate box under the column titled "Declined." I know that failure to follow the recommendations about vaccination may endanger the health or life of my child and others with whom my child might come into contact. I therefore agree to tell all health care professionals in all settings what vaccines my child has not received because he or she may need to be isolated or may require immediate medical evaluation and tests that might not be necessary if my child had been vaccinated.

I know that I may readdress this issue with my child's doctor or nurse at any time and that I may change my mind and accept vaccination for my child any time in the future.

I acknowledge that I have read this document in its entirety and fully understand it.

I have been provided with and given the opportunity to read each Vaccine Information Statement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention explaining the vaccine(s) and the disease(s) it prevents for each of the vaccine(s) checked as recommended and which I have declined, as indicated above. I have had the opportunity to discuss the recommendation and my refusal with my child's doctor or nurse, who has answered all of my questions about the recommended vaccine(s). A list of reasons for vaccinating, possible health consequences of non-vaccination, and possible side effects of each vaccine is available at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm). I understand the following:

- The purpose of and the need for the recommended vaccine(s).
- The risks and benefits of the recommended vaccine(s).

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____	Date: _____
Witness: _____	Date: _____
I have had the opportunity to rediscuss my decision not to vaccinate my child and still decline the recommended immunizations.	
Parent's Initials: _____	Date: _____
Parent's Initials: _____	Date: _____



## Parental Refusal to Accept Vaccination: Resources for Pediatricians

The following are some of the resources available to help pediatricians develop a productive dialogue with vaccine-hesitant parents and answer questions about vaccine risks and benefits:

### Web Sites

1. **AAP Childhood Immunization Support Program (CISP)**  
Information for providers and parents.  
[www.aap.org/immunization](http://www.aap.org/immunization)  
[www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/refusaltovaccinate.html](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/refusaltovaccinate.html)
2. **Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)**  
The IAC works to increase immunization rates by creating and distributing educational materials for health professionals and the public that enhance the delivery of safe and effective immunization services. The IAC “Unprotected People Reports” are case reports, personal testimonies, and newspaper and journal articles about people who have suffered or died from vaccine-preventable diseases.  
[www.immunize.org/reports](http://www.immunize.org/reports)
3. **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Immunization Program**  
Information about vaccine safety.  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp.htm)
4. **National Network for Immunization Information (NNii)**  
Includes information to help answer patients’ questions and provide the facts about immunizations.  
<http://www.immunizationinfo.org/professionals>
5. **Vaccine Education Center at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia**  
Information for parents includes “Vaccine Safety FAQs” and “A Look at Each Vaccine.”  
[www.vaccine.chop.edu](http://www.vaccine.chop.edu)
6. **Institute for Vaccine Safety, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health**  
Provides an independent assessment of vaccines and vaccine safety to help guide decision-makers and educate physicians, the public, and the media about key issues surrounding the safety of vaccines.  
[www.vaccinesafety.edu](http://www.vaccinesafety.edu)
7. **Immunize Canada**  
Immunize Canada aims to meet the goal of eliminating vaccine-preventable disease through education, promotion, advocacy, and media relations. It includes resources for parents and providers.  
[www.immunize.cpha.ca/en/default.aspx](http://www.immunize.cpha.ca/en/default.aspx)
8. **Sample office policy/letter to parents about refusal to vaccinate**

### Journal Articles

1. Offit PA, Jew RK. Addressing parents’ concerns: do vaccines contain harmful preservatives, adjuvants, additives, or residuals? *Pediatrics*. 2003;112(6 Pt 1):1394–1397
2. Offit PA, Quarles J, Gerber MA, et al. Addressing parents’ concerns: do multiple vaccines overwhelm or weaken the infant’s immune system? *Pediatrics*. 2002;109(1):124–129
3. Diekema DS, American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Bioethics. Responding to parental refusals of immunization of children. *Pediatrics*. 2005;115(5):1428–1431

### Books

1. American Academy of Pediatrics. *Red Book: 2012 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*. Pickering LK, Baker CJ, Long SS, Kimberlin DW, eds. 29th ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2012
2. Marshall GS. *The Vaccine Handbook: A Practical Guide for Clinicians*. 5th ed. West Islip, NY: Professional Communications, Inc; 2015

### Handout

1. Immunization Action Coalition. Reliable sources of immunization information: where to go to find answers! <http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4012.pdf>. Accessed October 17, 2012

## Reliable Immunization Resources for Parents

### Web Sites

1. **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Vaccine Information Statements**  
Provide possible health consequences of non-vaccination and possible side effects of each vaccine.  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm)
2. **AAP Childhood Immunization Support Program (CISP)**  
Information for providers and parents.  
[www.aap.org/immunization](http://www.aap.org/immunization)
3. **Why Immunize?**  
A description of the individual diseases and the benefits expected from vaccination.  
[www2.aap.org/immunization/families/faq/whyimmunize.pdf](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/families/faq/whyimmunize.pdf)
4. **Pennsylvania Immunization Education Program of Pennsylvania Chapter, AAP**  
Includes answers to common vaccine questions and topics, such as addressing vaccine safety concerns; evaluating anti-vaccine claims; sources of accurate immunization information on the Web; and talking with parents about vaccine safety.  
[www.paiep.org](http://www.paiep.org)
5. **CDC For Parents: Vaccines for Your Children**  
Information about vaccine safety.  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/index.html)
6. **National Network for Immunization Information (NNii)**  
Includes information to help answer patients’ questions and provide the facts about immunizations.  
[www.immunizationinfo.org/parents](http://www.immunizationinfo.org/parents)
7. **Vaccine Education Center at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia**  
Information for parents includes “Vaccine Safety FAQs” and “A Look at Each Vaccine.”  
[www.vaccine.chop.edu](http://www.vaccine.chop.edu)
8. **Institute for Vaccine Safety, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health**  
Provides an independent assessment of vaccines and vaccine safety to help guide decision-makers and educate physicians, the public, and the media about key issues surrounding the safety of vaccines.  
[www.vaccinesafety.edu](http://www.vaccinesafety.edu)
9. **Immunize Canada**  
Immunize Canada aims to meet the goal of eliminating vaccine-preventable disease through education, promotion, advocacy, and media relations. It includes resources for parents and providers.  
<http://immunize.cpha.ca/en/default.aspx>
10. **Vaccinate Your Baby**  
This Every Child By Two site serves as a central resource of vaccine information for parents. The site links to the latest research and studies about vaccines, an interactive timeline on the benefits of vaccines, information about vaccine safety and ingredients, and the importance of adhering to the recommended schedule.  
[www.vaccinateyourbaby.org](http://www.vaccinateyourbaby.org)

### Books

1. American Academy of Pediatrics. *Immunizations and Infectious Diseases: An Informed Parent’s Guide*. Fisher MC, ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2006
2. Myers MG, Pineda D. *Do Vaccines Cause That?! A Guide for Evaluating Vaccine Safety Concerns*. Galveston, TX: Immunizations for Public Health; 2008
3. Offit PA. *Autism’s False Prophets: Bad Science, Risky Medicine, and the Search for a Cure*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press; 2008
4. Offit PA. *Deadly Choices: How the Anti-Vaccine Movement Threatens Us All*. New York, NY: Basic Books; 2011
5. Mnookin S. *The Panic Virus: A True Story of Medicine, Science, and Fear*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster; 2011
6. Offit PA, Moser CA. *Vaccines and Your Child: Separating Fact from Fiction*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press; 2011

## Decision to Not Vaccinate My Child

*I am the parent/guardian of the child named at the bottom of this form. My healthcare provider has recommended that my child be vaccinated against the diseases indicated below. I have been given a copy of the Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) that explains the benefits and risks of receiving each of the vaccines recommended for my child. I have carefully reviewed and considered all of the information given to me. However, I have decided not to have my child vaccinated at this time. I have read and acknowledge the following:*

- I understand that some vaccine-preventable diseases (e.g., measles, mumps, pertussis [whooping cough]) are infecting unvaccinated U.S. children, resulting in many hospitalizations and even deaths.
- I understand that though vaccination has led to a dramatic decline in the number of U.S. cases of the diseases listed below, some of these diseases are quite common in other countries and can be brought to the U.S. by international travelers. My child, if unvaccinated, could easily get one of these diseases while traveling or from a traveler.
- I understand that my unvaccinated child could spread disease to another child who is too young to be vaccinated or whose medical condition (e.g., leukemia, other forms of cancer, immune system problems) prevents them from being vaccinated. This could result in long-term complications and even death for the other child.
- I understand that if *every* parent exempted their child from vaccination, these diseases would return to our community in full force.
- I understand that my child may not be protected by “herd” or “community” immunity (i.e., the degree of protection that is the result of having most people in a population vaccinated against a disease).
- I understand that some vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles and pertussis are extremely infectious and have been known to infect even the very few unvaccinated people living in highly vaccinated populations.
- I understand that if my child is not vaccinated and consequently becomes infected, he or she could experience serious consequences, such as amputation, pneumonia, hospitalization, brain damage, paralysis, meningitis, seizures, deafness, and death. Many children left intentionally unvaccinated have suffered severe health consequences from their parents’ decision not to vaccinate them.
- I understand that my child may be excluded from his or her child care facility, school, sports events, or other organized activities during disease outbreaks. This means that I could miss many days of work to stay home with my child.
- I understand that the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention all clearly support preventing diseases through vaccination.

Vaccine / Disease	VIS given (✓)	Vaccine recommended by doctor or nurse (Dr./Nurse initials)	I decline this vaccine (Initials of parent/guardian)
Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTaP)			
<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib)			
Hepatitis A (HepA)			
Hepatitis B (HepB)			
Human papillomavirus (HPV)			
Influenza			
Measles-mumps-rubella (MMR)			

Vaccine / Disease	VIS given (✓)	Vaccine recommended by doctor or nurse (Dr./Nurse initials)	I decline this vaccine (Initials of parent/guardian)
Meningococcal (MCV)			
Varicella (Var)			
Pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)			
Polio, inactivated (IPV)			
Rotavirus (RV)			
Tetanus-diphtheria (Td)			
Tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap)			

In signing this form, I acknowledge I am refusing to have my child vaccinated against one or more diseases listed above; I have placed my initials in the column titled “I decline this vaccine” to indicate the vaccine(s) I am declining. I understand that at any time in the future, I can change my mind and vaccinate my child.

Child’s name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Doctor/nurse signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Additional information for healthcare professionals about IAC's "Decision to Not Vaccinate My Child" form

Unfortunately, some parents will decide not to give their child some or all vaccines. For healthcare providers who want to assure that these parents fully understand the consequences of their decision, the Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) has produced a new form titled "Decision to Not Vaccinate My Child." IAC's form, which accompanies this page of additional information, facilitates and documents the discussion that a healthcare professional can have with parents about the risks of not having their child immunized before the child leaves the medical setting. Your use of IAC's form demonstrates the importance you place on timely and complete vaccination, focuses the parents' attention on the unnecessary risk for which they are accepting responsibility, and may encourage a vaccine-hesitant parent to accept your recommendations. According to an American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) survey on immunization practices, almost all pediatricians reported that when faced with parents who refuse vaccination they attempt to educate parents regarding the importance of immunization and document the refusal in the patient's medical record.<sup>1</sup>

Recommendations from the child's healthcare provider about a vaccine can strongly influence parents' final vaccination decision.<sup>2</sup> Most parents trust their children's doctor for vaccine-safety information (76% endorsed "a lot of trust"), according to researchers from the University of Michigan.<sup>3</sup> Simi-

larly, analyses of the 2009 HealthStyles Survey found that the vast majority of parents (81.7%) name their child's doctor or nurse as the most important source that helped them make decisions about vaccinating their child.<sup>4</sup> Gust and colleagues found that the advice of their children's healthcare provider was the main factor in changing the minds of parents who had been reluctant to vaccinate their children or who had delayed their children's vaccinations.<sup>5</sup> Vaccine-hesitant parents who felt satisfied with their pediatricians' discussion of vaccination most often chose vaccination for their child.<sup>6</sup>

All parents and patients should be informed about the risks and benefits of vaccination. This can be facilitated by providing the appropriate Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) for each vaccine to the parent or legal representative, which is a requirement under federal law when vaccines are to be given. When parents refuse one or more recommended immunizations, document that you provided the VIS(s), and have the parent initial and sign the vaccine refusal form. Keep the form in the patient's medical record. Revisit the immunization discussion at each subsequent appointment. Some healthcare providers may want to flag the charts of unimmunized or partially immunized children to be reminded to revisit the immunization discussion. Flagging also alerts the provider about missed immunizations when evaluating illness in children, especially in young children with fever of unknown origin.

## What do others say about documentation of parental refusal to vaccinate?

**American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):** "The use of this [AAP Refusal to Vaccinate form, available at [www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/refusaltovaccinate.html](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/refusaltovaccinate.html)] or a similar form in concert with direct and non-condescending discussion can demonstrate the importance you place on appropriate immunizations, focuses parents' attention on the unnecessary risk for which they are accepting responsibility, and may in some instances induce a wavering parent to accept your recommendations."<sup>7</sup>

**Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO):** "To address the risk of VPD, states should consider adopting more rigorous standards for non-medical vaccine exemptions that require parents to demonstrate that they have made a conscious, concerted, and informed decision in requesting these exemptions for their children. An example of such a standard might include a requirement for parents to complete a form that explicitly states the grounds for the exemption and requires them to acknowledge awareness of the disease-specific risks associated with not vaccinating their child(ren)."<sup>8</sup>

**National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO):** "School systems and childcare facilities (where appropriate) should use an exemption application form that requires a parental signature acknowledging their understanding that their decision not to immunize places their child and other children at risk for diseases and ensuing complications. The form should also state that in the event of an exposure to a vaccine-preventable illness, their child would be removed from school and all school-related activities for the appropriate two incubation periods beyond the date of onset of the last case, which is standard public health practice."<sup>9</sup>

**Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society (PIDS):** PIDS "opposes any legislation or regulation that would allow children to be exempted from mandatory immunizations based simply on their parents', or, in the case of adolescents, their own, secular personal beliefs." PIDS further recognizes that many states have or are considering adopting legislation or regulation that would allow for personal belief exemptions and outlines specific provisions to minimize use of exemptions as the "path of least resistance." One of the provisions reads as follows: "Before a child is granted an exemption,

the parents or guardians must sign a statement that delineates the basis, strength, and duration of their belief; their understanding of the risks that refusal to immunize has on their child's health and the health of others (including the potential for serious illness or death); and their acknowledgment that they are making the decision not to vaccinate on behalf of their child."<sup>10</sup>

### References

1. Diekema DS, and the Committee on Bioethics. Responding to parental refusals of immunization of children. *Pediatrics*. 2005;115:1428-1431. <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;115/5/1428>
2. Brewer NT, Fazekas KI. Predictors of HPV vaccine acceptability: a theory-informed, systematic review. *Prev Med*. 2007 Aug-Sep;45[2-3]:107-14. [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17628649](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17628649)
3. Freed GL, Clark SJ, Butchart AT, Singer DC, Davis MM. Sources and perceived credibility of vaccine-safety information for parents. *Pediatrics*. 2011 May;127 Suppl 1:S107-12. [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21502236](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21502236)
4. Kennedy A, Basket M, Sheedy K. Vaccine attitudes, concerns, and information sources reported by parents of young children: results from the 2009 HealthStyles survey. *Pediatrics*. 2011; 127 Suppl 1:S92-9. [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21502253](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21502253)
5. Gust DA, Darling N, Kennedy A, Schwartz B. Parents with doubts about vaccines: which vaccines and reasons why. *Pediatrics*. 2008;122:718-25. [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18829793](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18829793)
6. Benin AL, Wisler-Scher DJ, Colson E, Shapiro ED, Holmboe ES. Qualitative analysis of mothers' decision-making about vaccines for infants: the importance of trust. *Pediatrics*. 2006;117[5]:1532-41. [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16651306](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16651306)
7. AAP. Immunization Information, accessed on Sept. 4, 2013 on AAP website at [www2.aap.org/sections/infectdis/resources.cfm](http://www2.aap.org/sections/infectdis/resources.cfm).
8. ASTHO. Permissive State Exemption Laws Contribute to Increased Spread of Disease. 21 May 2011. Accessed on Oct. 17, 2011 on ASTHO website at [www.astho.org/uploadedFiles/Programs/Immunization/ASTHO%20Vaccine%20Refusal%20Brief.pdf](http://www.astho.org/uploadedFiles/Programs/Immunization/ASTHO%20Vaccine%20Refusal%20Brief.pdf)
9. NACCHO. Eliminating Personal Belief Exemptions from Immunization Requirements for Child Care and School Attendance. July 2011. Accessed on Oct. 17, 2011 on NACCHO website at [www.naccho.org/advocacy/positions/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=204056](http://www.naccho.org/advocacy/positions/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=204056)
10. PIDS. A Statement Regarding Personal Belief Exemption from Immunization Mandates. March 2011. Accessed on Oct. 17, 2011 on PIDS website at [www.pids.org/images/stories/pdf/pids-pbe-statement.pdf](http://www.pids.org/images/stories/pdf/pids-pbe-statement.pdf)

# Need help responding to vaccine-hesitant parents?

## Science-based materials are available from these respected organizations

### American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

Healthcare providers can find numerous resources on the AAP's website to help with parents and caregivers who have questions about vaccinating their child at [www2.aap.org/immunization/families/deciding.html](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/families/deciding.html). When parents cannot be convinced, consider using AAP's Refusal to Vaccinate form at [www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/pdf/RefusaltoVaccinate.pdf](http://www2.aap.org/immunization/pediatricians/pdf/RefusaltoVaccinate.pdf).

### California Immunization Coalition

The California Immunization Coalition (CIC) has developed several excellent provider pieces that discuss common questions many parents may have regarding vaccines for their children. These include

- "Responding to Parents' Top 10 Concerns" [www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/IMM-917.pdf](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/IMM-917.pdf)
- "Talking with Parents About Vaccine Safety" [www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/IMM-915.pdf](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/immunize/Documents/IMM-915.pdf)
- "Alternate Vaccine Schedules: Helping Parents Separate Fact From Fear" <http://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-988.pdf>

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Among CDC's many online immunization resources is the "Parent's Guide to Childhood Immunization," a 64-page booklet that can be ordered or printed at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/parents-guide](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/parents-guide). In addition, visit CDC's "Provider Resources for Vaccine Conversations with Parents" web section at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/conversations/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/conversations/index.html)

Other CDC materials, designed to help healthcare providers work with hesitant parents, include the following:

- "If You Choose Not to Vaccinate Your Child, Understand the Risks and Responsibilities" [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/conversations/downloads/not-vacc-risks-color-office.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/conversations/downloads/not-vacc-risks-color-office.pdf)
- "Infant Immunizations FAQs" [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/parent-questions.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/parent-questions.html)
- "Talking with Parents about Vaccines for Infants" [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/conversations/downloads/talk-infants-color-office.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/conversations/downloads/talk-infants-color-office.pdf)

### Every Child by Two (ECBT)

Created by Every Child by Two, [www.vaccinateyourbaby.org](http://www.vaccinateyourbaby.org) focuses on answering parents' commonly asked questions about vaccines. It features video clips and links to current vaccine news stories.

### Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)

IAC's Talking about Vaccines web section provides healthcare professionals with top vaccination resources from trusted sources such as CDC, AAP, IAC, VEC, and many more. Visit [www.immunize.org/concerns](http://www.immunize.org/concerns). Refer parents to IAC's website for the public at [www.vaccineinformation.org](http://www.vaccineinformation.org)

IAC has developed several patient handouts for vaccine-hesitant parents. These include:

- "Clear Answers & Smart Advice About Your Baby's Shots," an excerpt

from the popular book "Baby 411" by Dr. Ari Brown. [www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2068.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p2068.pdf)

- "Decision to Not Vaccinate My Child" [www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4059.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4059.pdf)
- "Reliable Sources of Immunization Information: Where to go to find answers!" [www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4012.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4012.pdf)
- "Vaccines Work!" [www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4037.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4037.pdf)

### Institute for Vaccine Safety, Johns Hopkins University

The Institute for Vaccine Safety collects vaccine-specific safety information. Of particular interest is its "Components of Vaccines" section, which contains tables specifying the contents of various vaccines: [www.vaccinesafety.edu/components.htm](http://www.vaccinesafety.edu/components.htm).

### Vaccine Education Center (VEC) Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

VEC offers handouts in English and Spanish as well as four colorful booklets covering immunization of infants, teens, and adults, as well as one about vaccine safety. These educational materials can be downloaded at [www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/order-educational-materials/order-educational-materials.html](http://www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/order-educational-materials/order-educational-materials.html). VEC has developed a number of patient handouts covering vaccine topics of interest. These include the following

- "Too Many Vaccines? What you should know" at: [www.chop.edu/export/download/pdfs/articles/vaccine-education-center/too-many-vaccines.pdf](http://www.chop.edu/export/download/pdfs/articles/vaccine-education-center/too-many-vaccines.pdf)
- "Vaccine Ingredients: What you should know" at: [www.chop.edu/export/download/pdfs/articles/vaccine-education-center/vaccine-ingredients.pdf](http://www.chop.edu/export/download/pdfs/articles/vaccine-education-center/vaccine-ingredients.pdf)

### For parents with concerns about vaccines and autism

AAP has issued a statement that can be printed at [www2.aap.org/advocacy/releases/autismparentfacts.htm](http://www2.aap.org/advocacy/releases/autismparentfacts.htm). Parents may wish to investigate further at [www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/developmental-disabilities/Pages/Autism-Spectrum-Disorders.aspx](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/developmental-disabilities/Pages/Autism-Spectrum-Disorders.aspx). IAC also recommends these books:

- *Autism's False Prophets: Bad Science, Risky Medicine, and the Search for a Cure*, by Paul A. Offit, MD
- *Unstrange Minds: Remapping the World of Autism*, by Roy Richard Grinker, PhD

And, here are three well-researched handouts from IAC and one from VEC:

- "MMR Vaccine Does Not Cause Autism: Examine the Evidence!" [www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4026.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4026.pdf)
- "Evidence shows vaccines unrelated to autism" [www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4028.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4028.pdf)
- "Vaccines and Autism: What you should know" [www.chop.edu/export/download/pdfs/articles/vaccine-education-center/autism.pdf](http://www.chop.edu/export/download/pdfs/articles/vaccine-education-center/autism.pdf)