

Survey finds differing parental resistance to COVID-19 vaccines based on gender, income, politics

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Editor's note: For the latest news on COVID-19, visit <http://bit.ly/AAPNewsCOVID19>.

About 27% of mothers and 11% of fathers say they are extremely unlikely to vaccinate their children against COVID-19, a [new survey found](#).

The data showed vaccine resistance differed based on parents' education, income and political party and come as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is poised to decide whether to authorize the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for adolescents ages 12-15 years.

The COVID-19 Consortium for Understanding the Public's Policy Preferences Across States, a joint project of Northeastern University, Harvard University, Rutgers University and Northwestern University, surveyed nearly 22,000 people around the U.S. from April 1 through May 3. They reported on those who said they were "extremely unlikely" to have their child vaccinated.

About 34% of those earning less than \$25,000 a year were resistant to vaccinating their children against COVID-19 compared to 5% of parents earning more than \$150,000 a year. Differences also were apparent by political party, with 33% of Republican parents resisting COVID-19 vaccines for their children compared to 7% of Democrats.

The survey also found parents who were younger and those without a four-year college degree were less likely to vaccinate their children. Vaccine resistance was similar among White, Hispanic and Black parents, while Asian American parents were less resistant.

In addition, the survey asked about school vaccination requirements and found about 58% of parents would support them.

Children and adolescents have been making up a growing share of new COVID-19 cases, reaching 22.4% last week, according to [data from the AAP and Children's Hospital Association](#). More than 3.78 million children have been infected with SARS-CoV-2 and at least 303 have died. The pandemic also has taken a toll on [children's mental and emotional health](#), social well-being and their [educational experience](#).

Preliminary data from [Pfizer-BioNTech](#) and [Moderna](#) found COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness in adolescents of 100% and 96% respectively and no serious safety concerns. President Joe Biden said if the FDA approves a vaccine for adolescents, officials will focus on making vaccines available through pediatricians and family physicians. The AAP and CDC have guidance to help physicians combat vaccine hesitancy and prepare to vaccinate teens (see resources).

"Parents trust pediatricians," the AAP said in [its guidance](#). "We need to listen to parents' questions, take the information and provide clear, consistent information."

In the meantime, as vaccination slows among adults, federal officials said they are working to address issues of confidence, motivation and access by deploying trusted messengers to answer questions, asking pharmacies to take walk-ins, increasing mobile clinics and encouraging employers to provide paid time off. To find a vaccination site, people can visit <http://vaccines.gov> or text their ZIP code to 438829.

"The only way to get cases to come down and stay down is for everyone to get vaccinated," Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy, M.D., M.B.A. said in a press briefing Friday. "That's how you can protect your community and help all of us return to the activities and the life we love."

Resources

- [AAP guidance on COVID-19 vaccines for children](#)
- [AAP clinical report "Countering Vaccine Hesitancy"](#)
- [AAP resources for talking to vaccine-hesitant parents](#)
- [Information for parents from HealthyChildren.org on COVID-19 vaccines for children and adolescents](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 vaccination communication toolkit](#)