

Parents transformed into superheroes in PSA touting importance of vaccines

June 1, 2021

from AAP Advocacy and External Affairs

Article type: [News](#)

Topics: [Infectious Diseases](#), [Public Health](#), [Vaccine/Immunization](#)



At the start of the pandemic, pediatricians reported their waiting rooms had become “ghost towns” as parents canceled well and sick visits, and the rates of childhood immunizations dropped precipitously.

To call attention to children’s health needs, the AAP launched a campaign, Call Your Pediatrician, which is continuing in 2021. The campaign’s goals remain the same: to reassure parents that visiting the pediatrician during the COVID-19 pandemic is safe, and that these regular visits are important for their child’s health.

The AAP has worked with Chicago-based creative agency M. Harris & Co. on the ad campaign, which includes funny and endearing snapshots of children, a video of a baby panda getting a checkup at the San Diego Zoo, infographics and other digital ads designed to capture parents’ attention. Customizable infographics and handouts also were created and shared with AAP chapters.

As part of the campaign, AAP recently unveiled a new national public service announcement (PSA) that depicts parents taking their child to the pediatrician for a vaccine and then transforming into animated superheroes. “This is a superhero moment!” the voice-over says.

The PSA, in English and Spanish, has been viewed roughly 3 million times on Instagram, Facebook and Google, and now is in national distribution to TV and radio outlets.

AAP President Lee Savio Beers, M.D., FAAP, conducted a virtual media tour in April to further emphasize the messages of the campaign. Interviews have aired in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Denver, Tampa, Atlanta, Houston, Boston and other major cities.

“Parents are superheroes in so many ways, and this PSA talks about how you’re a superhero when you bring your child into the doctor’s office to get caught up on all their vaccines and other health care,” Dr.

Beers said. "It's such an important and empowering message."

AAP members are encouraged to participate in the campaign by sharing the graphics and videos in their social media, practice newsletters or other communications. The digital toolkit at www.aap.org/CallYourPediatrician includes downloadable graphics, photos, videos, gifs, HealthyChildren.org articles and sample messages. New pieces include printable coloring pages for kids, using the superhero artwork from the PSAs.

As attention turns to motivating families to vaccinate their older children and teens against COVID-19, the Academy will continue to remind families of the importance of all the vaccines that are available to protect their children's health.

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