



## Report: Racial disparities found in pediatric COVID-19 vaccination

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

Child and adolescent COVID-19 vaccination rates in the U.S. are highest among Asian youths while Black children have some of the lowest rates, especially among younger children, according to a [new study](#).

“To address disparities in child and adolescent COVID-19 vaccination coverage, vaccination providers and trusted messengers should provide culturally relevant information and vaccine recommendations and build a higher level of trust among those groups with lower coverage,” researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) wrote in today’s [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#).

The team analyzed data from a nationally representative telephone survey of about 95,000 adults reporting on the COVID-19 vaccination status of children ages 5-17 years.

Coverage with at least one dose as of Aug. 31, 2022, was 75% for Asian youths, 49% among Hispanic/Latino youths, 48% among other/multiple race youths, 45% among White youths and 43% among Black youths.

Rates for Black adolescents ages 12 and older were lower than Asian and Hispanic/Latino adolescents but similar to White and other/multiple race children. When looking at the 5-11 age group, Black children also fell behind other/multiple race children.

Rates were highest for the oldest pediatric age groups. For instance, about 63% of Asian children ages 5-11 years had received at least one dose compared to 92% of Asian children ages 16-17 years. For Black children, 30% of ages 5-11 years and 66% of ages 16-17 years received at least one dose.

Adolescents had higher coverage rates if they had a mother with a college degree, lived in a household with an annual income of at least \$75,000, often wore a mask in public or had received a flu vaccine, according to the report.

Unvaccinated families had lower levels of confidence in vaccine safety, lower rates of a vaccine recommendation from a health care provider and lower rates of family and friends who had been vaccinated. Among parents of unvaccinated children, those who are White had the highest rates of reluctance, while Black and Hispanic parents were more open to getting their child or adolescent vaccinated.

The AAP and CDC support vaccination of eligible children ages 6 months and older, but uptake has been slow. As of late December, rates of primary series completion were 61% among children ages 12-17 years, 32% among ages 5-11 years, 5% among ages 2-4 years and 3% among children under 2 years, [according to CDC data](#).

Authors of the study called for additional public health efforts to improve vaccination rates and pointed to the CDC's [COVID Vaccination Field Guide](#) as a resource.

“A multifaceted approach with community collaboration and provider recommendation are essential to increasing childhood COVID-19 vaccination coverage,” they wrote.

## Resources

- [CDC clinical considerations for administering COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- [AAP COVID vaccination resources](#)
- [AAP pediatric COVID-19 vaccine dosing quick reference guide](#)
- [CDC COVID Vaccination Field Guide](#)
- [AAP/Health and Human Services COVID vaccine toolkit](#)
- [Information for parents on COVID vaccines from HealthyChildren.org](#)