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Title

Factors Influencing Parental Intent to Vaccinate Children Against COVID-19 in the United States

Priority 1 (Research Category)

COVID-19

Presenters

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Abstract

Introduction. In recent decades, childhood vaccinations have increasingly become a source of debate, controversy, and challenging decisions for parents, with the COVID-19 vaccine certainly being no exception. It is important to have discussions around parents' hesitancy or refusal to vaccinate their children against COVID-19, as the information might help develop educational programs to increase COVID-19 vaccination rates among children. The objective of the study was to determine factors that influenced parents' decisions to not vaccinate their children against COVID-19.

Methods. This study involved using data from Phase 3.7, Week 53 of the United States Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey (N = 68,504), collected from January 4 to January 16, 2023. The Household Pulse survey began in 2020 to provide insight into how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected households in the United States. Standard descriptive statistics and adjusted odds ratio (aOR) were used to analyze the data.

Results. Slightly over 43% (n=29,712) of the respondents reported having children living in the household. The top three reasons for those participants to not vaccinate their children against COVID-19 were concerns about side effects of the vaccine on their children, not trusting the vaccine, and belief that children in the household were not members of a high-risk group. Nearly 87% (n=59,363) of the respondents reported having received a COVID-19 vaccination. The respondents who had received the COVID-19 vaccine, compared with those who had not, were more likely to vaccinate their children under 5 years old (aOR = 29.62; 95% CI, 19.98 to 43.90; P <.001), children 5 to 11 years old (aOR = 15.53; 95% CI, 10.45 to 23.07; P <.001), and children 12 to 17 years old (aOR = 10.14; 95% CI, 6.59 to 15.59; P <.001). Participants with higher levels of education (bachelor's degree or higher) were at higher odds of

vaccinating their children against COVID-19 compared with those with lower levels of education (\leq associate degree; aOR = 5.79; 95% CI, 5.43 to 6.17; $P < .001$).

Conclusion. The data showed that United States parents do not fully trust the COVID-19 vaccines to be safe for their children despite evidence to the contrary. Educated people who have received the COVID-19 vaccines are more likely to vaccinate their children against the disease, suggesting that with continued education, we can combat these unwarranted concerns regarding the COVID-19 vaccines.