

Why Pediatricians Recommend Vaccines: An Open Letter to Parents

By: David Higgins, MD, MPH, MS, FAAP

From the day your child was born, I saw both the overwhelming joy and the weight of responsibility in your eyes. I know because I was there with you.

Decisions made with love

Since then, you have faced countless decisions about your child's health. *Which car seat is safe? When can I give them peanuts? Should we go ahead and do the surgery?* I was there with you, helping you navigate those choices. I saw you make them with love, care, and a touch of anxiety.



One of those decisions seems to have become more complicated recently: *Should I give my child vaccines?* I want you to know that most parents do without hesitation. But some like you have concerns. These concerns often grow from a claim in a viral post, a neighbor's offhand comment, or a stranger sowing fear online.

But now, something dangerous has changed. Those same baseless claims are no longer confined to corners of the internet or unsolicited remarks; they're coming from political leaders responsible for protecting our health. Some institutions we once trusted are now led by people echoing conspiracy theories or spreading misleading information.

Who can you trust?

It's no wonder you feel confused. You want what's best for your child, and it makes sense that you would ask: *Who can I trust?*

When pediatricians recommend vaccines, we ask for your trust—not just because we have volumes of evidence behind us (we do) or because we have decades of training and experience, but because we have been with you through it all.

Remember that late night when you called because you were terrified by your child's rapid breathing? Or the moment I held your hand and explained why your child needed an emergency procedure? I was there with you then, and when it comes to vaccines, you can trust that I am here with you now, with your child's best interest at heart.

Pediatricians don't choose this work for money or fame. We chose it because we care deeply about your child's health, just like you.

We are not selling supplements, building brands, or profiting off your fear. And we don't (https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/fact-checked/fact-checked-childrens-health-not-financial-incentives-guides-pediatricians-immunization-recommendations/?srsltid=AfmBOorJfGCutUrP0076UzRFYtTVym4OSogv6i2-oBYXA-XcXYlimSpb&_gl=1%2agg1yuf%2a_ga%2aMTM4ODE3NTcwMi4xNzI2MjM5MjYx%2a_ga_FD9D3XZVQQ%2aczE3NTY0OTI1NjUkbzgzOSRnMSR0MTc1NjQ5ODE4MSRqNjAkbdAkaDA.) get rich providing vaccines. In fact, we'd make more
 • treating kids sick from preventable diseases than protecting them and preventing illness with vaccines. But
 ot what you want. And it's not what we want either.

We want your child to be healthy and happy, building forts, learning to ride a bike and getting their first job. That is why we recommend vaccines. Not for politics or "big pharma." For your child. [Back to Top](#)

Getting the answers you deserve

I know that sometimes we are rushed, and getting in to see us isn't always easy. That frustrates us too. We understand it can feel easier to search for answers on your own than to speak with us. But we are committed to fixing the broken systems that make it harder for you to get the answers you deserve.

And we don't always have an answer to every question. Medicine evolves, and science grows. But we will never stop learning, listening, and partnering with you to do what's best for your child.

We will be here for you and your child

It doesn't matter who you voted for, where you live, or what you believe; you and your child will always get my best. And if you choose not to give your child a vaccine and they end up in the ER with a preventable illness, it will devastate me, knowing it was avoidable. But I will fight for them with everything I have; I've done it before.

As lies spread from the top down, you will hear more politicized noise, and your confusion may grow. But you will also hear us, your pediatricians, speaking clearly: Vaccines will keep your child healthy.

Trust the Vaccine Experts Who Have Always Been Here for Kids | AAP



We'll stand up to the baseless claims, no matter where they come from. We welcome your questions and will help you find answers rooted in science and compassion. Because that is what compassionate, informed care really means.

We ask for your trust because we have always been here, caring for your child alongside you.

More information

- [Childhood Immunizations: Common Questions \(/English/safety-prevention/immunizations/Pages/childhood-immunizations-common-questions.aspx\)](#)
- [All About the Recommended Immunization Schedules \(/English/safety-prevention/immunizations/Pages/Recommended-Immunization-Schedules.aspx\)](#)
- [Pediatricians to Follow for Trustworthy Content on Children's Health \(/English/family-life/Media/Pages/follow-pediatricians-for-trustworthy-content-on-childrens-health.aspx\)](#)
- [Fact checked: Children's Health, Not Financial Incentives, Guides Pediatricians' Immunization Recommendations \(https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/fact-checked/fact-checked-childrens-health-not-financial-incentives-guides-pediatricians-immunization-recommendations/?l=1%2a1nhfi3%2a_ga%2aMTM4ODE3NTcwMi4xNzI2MjM5MjYx%2a_ga_FD9D3XZVQQ%2aczE3NTUyNzQ2OTUjzc5MiRnMSROMTc1NTI3ODc0NiRqMTkkbDAkaDA.\) \(AAP.org\)](#)

About Dr. Higgins

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