SURVEY ADDRESSING IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON TEENS
A UNITY Consortium Initiative

KEY MESSAGES

SURVEY OBJECTIVES

• Assess the impact of COVID-19 on attitudes of parents and AYAs toward vaccines for AYAs
• Capture perspectives through various phases of public health interventions, social behaviors, economic impact, and potential treatments and COVID-19 vaccines

UNITY GOALS

• Generate insights and credible evidence to inform messages and programs for UNITY and Members/Liaisons
• Support activities that educate, prepare and align parents, AYAs, and HCPs on the clear and certain value of immunization as a driver of adolescent health during COVID pandemic and when COVID-19 vaccine(s) become available

KEY MESSAGES

Adolescent Health During COVID-19

• Confusion and fear around COVID-19 are impacting adolescent health well beyond the risks associated with the pandemic. At a time when teens should be exploring new life moments, they are in isolation and missing social interaction with peers in and outside of school. According to a recent national survey of parents and teens conducted by UNITY Consortium, nearly two-thirds of teens are experiencing some or a lot of stress.
“The uncertainty associated with the pandemic is hard for everyone to endure, but the isolation and disruption of routine can be particularly hard for adolescents. Our adolescent patients who struggle with anxiety, depression, disordered eating are waiting longer to be seen due to COVID-19 precautions and may require more intervention when seen.”

- Amy B. Middleman, M.D., M.S.Ed., M.P.H.
Professor of Pediatrics, CHF Kasterke-Griggs-McLaughlin Chair in Pediatrics
Chief, Section of Adolescent Medicine, Department of Pediatrics
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

“The COVID-19 pandemic is two-pronged. The first, which has dominated the airways, is the suffering, hospitalization and death caused by the virus. The second, in the end, might have a longer lasting effect. Specifically, the joblessness that has led to massive homelessness and food insecurity and mental health issues, not the least of which is the inordinate amount of stress on families, especially among teenagers.”

- Paul A. Offit, M.D.
Director of the Vaccine Education Center
Division of Infectious Disease, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

- Families continuously weigh what is safe and what is not. While parents and teens may have the best of intentions, fears and concerns around the pandemic have impacted teens seeing physicians for a well visit check-up as only 4 in 10 teens believe that it is safe to do so.

KEY FINDINGS: COVID-19 IMPACT

Parents and teens feel only moderately safe for teens to participate in many activities including going to a pharmacy or doctor’s clinic. “Safer than” activities such as attending social events and visiting inside restaurants have lower safety agreement scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Level of Safety</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top 3 Most-Safe Activities</td>
<td>Very Safe (I feel safe) at all Safe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to a pharmacy for healthcare services/products</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to a doctor’s office/clinic for a well visit</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to a doctor’s office/clinic for an urgent care visit</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LOW Personal Safety

Going to a beach | 54% | 57%
Getting a haircut at a salon or barber | 34% | 32%
Going to a social or public event indoors | 29% | 29%
Eating inside a restaurant | 30% | 32%
Going to a social or public event outdoors | 34% | 35%

Unfortunately, these concerns do impact teens’ overall health as half of parents indicate their teens’ health check-ups have been cancelled or delayed due to COVID-19. Furthermore, the American Academy of Pediatrics stated, “Since the onset of the pandemic, a significant drop in well-child visits has resulted in delays in vaccinations, delays in appropriate screenings and referrals and delays in anticipatory guidance to assure optimal health.”

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In a time when existing, recommended adolescent vaccination is critical to overall health, and mental health concerns and stress due to fears and isolation have increased, well-visit appointments should be a priority.

"Many adolescents in general have postponed routine care. We are starting to see our patients come in after having missed important preventive care and vaccinations. It is critical that we continue to encourage our patients to maintain their vaccination status and general health - especially in the face of this pandemic."

- Amy B. Middleman, M.D., M.S.Ed., M.P.H.
Professor of Pediatrics, CHF Kasterke-Griggs-McLaughlin Chair in Pediatrics
Chief, Section of Adolescent Medicine, Department of Pediatrics
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

Proof Points
- Nearly all agree COVID-19 is a serious disease and believe masks and social distancing guidelines help stop the spread and therefore should be followed.
- About half of teens and parents believe it is acceptable to take a few small risks in order to return to everyday activities.
While one-third or less of parents and teens feel safe returning to leisure activities or indoor venues for services like haircuts or dining, there is a moderate level of comfort (40-45%) for getting medical services at a doctor’s office/clinic or pharmacy.

### Adolescent Vaccinations During COVID-19

About four out of five of parents and teens agree vaccines protect against specific diseases and help promote future health. Further, they agree it is important for teens to get existing recommended vaccines. However, according to the Health Care Cost Institute, critical childhood vaccines declined by as much as 75% during the height of the pandemic.²

- The survey validates ongoing efforts to educate parents, adolescents and young adults reinforcing the value and importance of vaccination. About 60% of parents and teens agreed that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased their perception of the importance of vaccines overall for their teens’ health. A significant minority of parents and teens do not agree with the importance of vaccines for teens. Additional education is needed to reinforce the importance of vaccination and how following the guidelines saves lives.
• Medical experts and scientists agree that flu shots have heightened importance this year, with both the flu and COVID-19 spreading at the same time. More work is needed to ensure every teen and parent understands the value of a flu shot this and every year.

**Proof Points**

- When considering specific vaccinations, at least three-quarters of parents believe all vaccines are important for their teens’ overall health and well-being, though COVID-19 and flu were viewed as less important than measles, Tdap and meningitis.
Potential Vaccines to Protect Adolescents from COVID-19

- Most parents say they will consider getting their teens vaccinated with a future COVID-19 vaccine, but not necessarily right away. They will look for experience of others and to their doctors to share information and assurance about the safety and efficacy of the vaccine.
- When asked about a future COVID-19 vaccine, about 7 in 10 parents would consider getting their teen vaccinated, but not necessarily right away. Almost 3 in 10 parents would take action to vaccinate their teen ASAP while others would gauge its safety by waiting until many others have gotten vaccinated (27%) or deciding after their own COVID-19 vaccination experience (17%). Based on the Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccine consensus report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, teens, who are currently not part of the clinical trials, are not included in the initial rollout of COVID-19 vaccines.\(^3\)
- Evidence has grown that certain racial and ethnic groups are disproportionately affected by COVID-19, yet a few significant differences on intent to vaccinate against COVID-19 by racial group were revealed.
- Parents identifying as Black/African American are less likely than Caucasian parents to indicate they will get a future COVID-19 vaccine for themselves as soon as possible (19% compared to 33%) and for their teen (18% compared to 30%).
- Many more Black/African American parents (38%) than White/Caucasian parents (23%) indicated they will wait until others have been vaccinated before they vaccinate their teen.

Yet, the uncertainty around the safety and efficacy of a COVID-19 vaccine looms. Parents and teens are most likely not to get the vaccine because they are concerned about possible side effects (39 and 37%, respectively).
“...during my service on the FDA’s Vaccine Advisory Committee, I have come to know people at the FDA who are involved in vaccine licensure. They are exactly who you would want them to be—dedicated to protecting the public from products that are unsafe or ineffective... In summary, while people are understandably nervous about soon-to-be-released COVID-19 vaccines, I think they can take comfort in the fact that many people in supervisory positions, as well as a cadre of independent, academic scientists standing behind them, are monitoring this process and looking out for the public’s best interests.”

- Paul A. Offit, M.D.

Director of the Vaccine Education Center
Division of Infectious Disease, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

Proof Points

- Two-thirds of parents indicate they are likely to conduct their own independent research once a teen-approved COVID-19 vaccine is released. They will most often seek information regarding the vaccine from doctors or other healthcare providers.

- Parents and teens are most likely to get the teen-approved COVID-19 vaccine to protect their teen/themselves, and to protect everyone in their family.
The more effective the vaccine, the more likely parents are to vaccinate their teen; at least half indicate likelihood to get the vaccine for their teens as long as it reduces the risk of COVID-19 by at least 50%.

- Only 6 in 10 parents and teens are confident that future COVID-19 vaccines will be safe and about half have concerns about the safety and efficacy of the vaccines.
- At the time of this survey there are no licensed vaccines for COVID-19, so parents and teens are not generally aware of any clinical trial results and have not been exposed to consumer education on potential new vaccine(s).

**ABOUT THE SURVEY**

A multi-wave, on-line survey of two nationally representative U.S. groups:(1) parents of adolescents ages 13-18 (n=593) and (2) adolescents ages 13-18 (n=300). Survey Wave 1 was fielded Aug 11-Sep 18, 2020. Two additional survey waves are planned during the 2020/21 flu season and when COVID-19 vaccines are licensed. The survey replicates selected questions on vaccine and preventive health attitudes previously measured in UNITY research conducted in 2016, generating comparisons to a pre-pandemic period.

The UNITY survey was supported by Pfizer, Inc., a member of UNITY Consortium. The survey was conducted online by Blueberry. For complete survey methodology, please contact UNITY. [www.unity4teenvax.org](http://www.unity4teenvax.org)

