

## Don't Wait. Vaccinate

April 26, 2021

Dear Healthcare Providers:

**Now is the time to catch up on adolescent vaccination.** According to Unity™ Consortium<sup>1</sup> Mom Advisors, it is difficult for Moms to prioritize adolescent well visits – especially during the pandemic. At the same time, parents remain concerned about safely returning to healthcare provider (HCP) settings. With these challenges, it is not surprising that **3 in 10 parents** say that well visits can wait or are not urgent right now (Unity survey, Feb 2021<sup>2</sup>).

These parental concerns are reflected in dramatic drops in annual adolescent well visits and immunizations during the pandemic. While visits are rebounding, much work remains for us to get back to pre-pandemic levels. Adolescents are still **20% behind** pre-pandemic vaccination rates<sup>3</sup>, **leaving them susceptible** to vaccine-preventable illnesses such as meningococcal meningitis, human papillomavirus (HPV) associated cancers and pertussis. **Adolescents and parents need their HCP's help now to catch up and stay on track.**

This summer many of us will be catching up on missed activities. In addition, the COVID-19 vaccine may be available broadly to teens this summer. With their many competing priorities, adolescents may not have time to get routine immunizations during the peak vaccination summer months. Plus, parents will want to be ready to meet states' school vaccination requirements. **Now is the time to remind parents to schedule well visits for their adolescents and get them caught up on routine vaccinations such as meningococcal and HPV vaccinations.**

Unity Consortium has launched its **Don't Wait. Vaccinate** campaign to address these challenges. HCPs can play a critical role by taking proactive steps now to reach out to parents and adolescents. Consider these actions:

- ✓ Assure parents about measures in place for safe in-person visits
- ✓ Accelerate scheduling well visits and vaccination, rather than waiting until summer
- ✓ Use electronic health records and vaccine registries to identify, contact and schedule adolescents for immunizations
- ✓ Assess vaccination status during every adolescent visit to take advantage of all opportunities
- ✓ Partner with school and community organizations to increase awareness of the need to schedule well visits and immunizations

Engage with Unity's **Don't Wait. Vaccinate** campaign by accessing the [campaign toolkit](#). Together, we can make sure that our adolescents get the care and vaccines they need.



<sup>1</sup> Unity Consortium is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization with diverse members and a common objective – to improve adolescent immunization coverage within the context of preventive health. Visit <https://www.unity4teenvax.org>

<sup>2</sup> COVID-19 Impact on Parent and Teen Beliefs toward Preventive Health and Vaccines Survey. 2/2021. Data on file, Unity Consortium.

<sup>3</sup> <https://blog.ncqa.org/webinar-growing-vaccination-crisis-needs-immediate-attention/>

Signed,

Unity Consortium Board of Directors and Officers, <https://www.unity4teenvax.org/about-us/#leadership>:

Kristen Feemster, MD

L.J Tan, MS, PhD

Claire Hannan, MPH

Greg Zimet, PhD

Ardi Kazarian

Judy Klein

Luis Romano, MD

Jane Quinn

Mitchell Rothholz, RPh

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Vaccinate Your Family